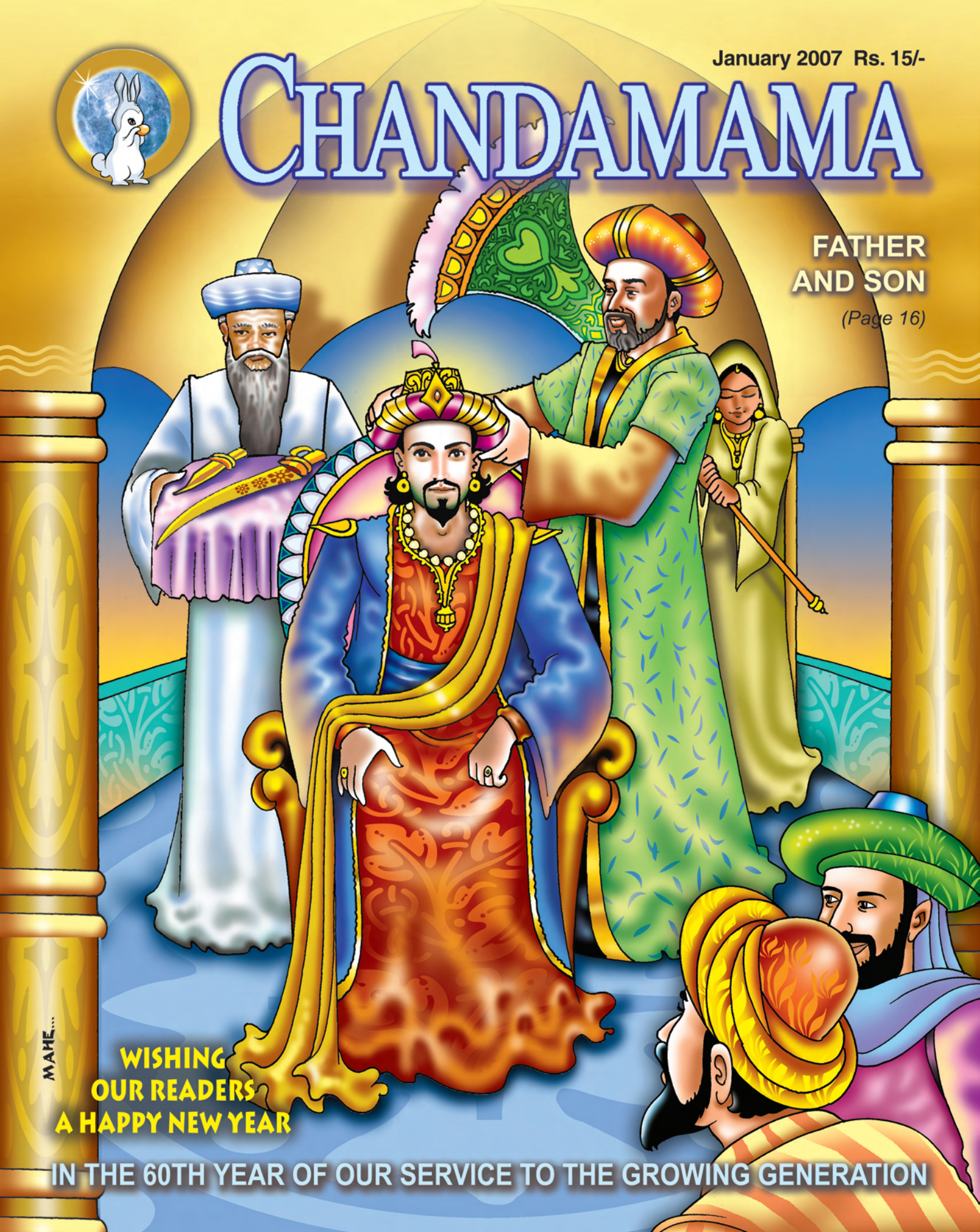
January 2007 Rs. 15/-

CHANDAMAMA

FATHER AND SON

(Page 16)



WISHING OUR READERS A HAPPY NEW YEAR

IN THE 60TH YEAR OF OUR SERVICE TO THE GROWING GENERATION



NOW YOU CAN BUY YOUR FAVOURITE

CHANDAMAMA (English, Telugu, Hindi, Oriya) and JUNIOR CHANDAMAMA at the following Head Post Offices in Visakhapatnam region.

The HPOs will also accept pre-paid SUBSCRIPTIONS.

LIST OF HEAD POST OFFICES:

Amadalavalasa	Mandapeta	Samalkot
Amalapuram	Narsipatnam	Srikakulam
Anakapalli	Parvathipuram	Tekkali
Bobbili	Rajahmundry	Visakhapatnam
Chodavaram	R.C.Puram	Vizianagaram
Kakinada	Razole	Waltair



Details available at the Post Offices. Avail of this service at your doorstep!

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS :

English Rs 180
Other languages Rs 150
Junior Chandamama Rs 150

SINGLE COPY :

Chandamama Rs 15; in Telugu, Hindi, Oriya Rs 13 each;
Junior Chandamama Rs 15.

भारतीय डाक
INDIA POST

HONOUR TO CHANDAMAMA

With its 60th birthday fast approaching in another six months, the services of your favourite magazine, *Chandamama,* to the growing generation were recognised recently by the **Telugu Samskruti Vikasa Vedika** at Tirupati and **Sri Venkateswara Bala Kuteer**, Guntur, where the magazine's efforts to enrich children's literature were recalled, and your Editor was personally honoured. His 40 years' association with the magazine as Editor and Publisher came in for special commendation and words of appreciation, which he promptly dedicated to the magazine and its founders.

Chandamama wishes to thank the two organisations for choosing this 60-year-old children's magazine for being honoured.

Chandmama owes this honour to its readers, admirers and well-wishers.

Chandamama wishes to thank its readers for their unstinted support all these years.

Chandamama hopes to enjoy their patronage in the coming years.

Chandamama wishes to thank both the print and electronic media for their appreciation of the magazine's progress.

- Publisher



VOL. 38 JANUARY 2007 NO. 01



7
The Magical Sword
(Vikram and Vetala)



12
The Tremor
(Ruskin Bond)



16
Father and Son
(A page from Indian history)



26
A Just Verdict
(Humorous story)



48
Glimpses of Devi Bhagavatam
(Mythology)



53
'Chittappas' or Cheats?
(A folktale from Tamilnadu)

CONTENTS

- ★ Mail Bag ...06
- ★ Indiascope ...11
- ★ A Parable from Swami Ramtheerth ...15
- ★ Science Fair ...18
- ★ The Fearless Four *(Comics)* ... 20
- ★ Self Criticism *(A Jataka tale)* ...24
- ★ Under a Curse ...30
- ★ Kaleidoscope ...33
- ★ Book Review ...37
- ★ The Master of the Clouds *(From the Arabian Nights)* ...38
- ★ A Fraudulent Saint ...44
- ★ Puzzle Dazzle ...47
- ★ The Concealed Saint *(Anecdotes from the lives of the great)* ...50
- ★ Newsflash ...52
- ★ Laugh Till You Drop ...56
- ★ A Discovery Through Shower of Arrows *(Adventure & Exploration)* ...57
- ★ Garuda *(Comics)* ... 60
- ★ Chandamama India Quiz ...64
- ★ Quiz 11 and 12 results ...65
- ★ Photo Caption Contest ...66

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION : English Rs.180/-
Other languages Rs.150/- Send D.D. (payable at Chennai) or money order in favour of **Chandamama India Ltd**. with the name and address of the person you are gifting it to, and the language edition subscribed for.
Add Rs.90/- on outstation cheques.

Subscriptions by air mail to all countries other than India Rs. 1,200/-
For USA & Canada 12 issues by air mail English $ 30
Other languages $ 20 Remittances payable at Chennai in favour of **CHANDAMAMA INDIA LIMITED**
No.82 Defence Officers' Colony, Ekkatuthangal, Chennai - 600 097.
Phone : 2231 3637 / 2234 7399 E-mail : chandamama@vsnl.com

FOR BOOKING SPACE IN THIS MAGAZINE PLEASE CONTACT :

CHENNAI : SHIVAJI
Ph: 044-2231 3637 / 2234 7399
Mobile : 98412-77347
email : advertisements@chandamama.org

DELHI : OBEROI MEDIA SERVICES
Telefax (011) 22424184
Mobile : 98100 -72961, email : oberoi@chandamama.com

© The stories, articles and designs contained in this issue are the exclusive property of the Publishers.
Copying or adapting them in any manner/medium will be dealt with according to law.

Founded by
B. Nagi Reddi
Chakrapani

Editor
Viswam

Editorial Advisors
Ruskin Bond
Manoj Das

Consultant Editor
K.Ramakrishnan



Year of the Earth: our contribution

The year 2007 is of great significance to all of us in *Chandamama,* including the thousands of our readers. For, their favourite magazine completes sixty years of publication. To every Indian, it will also be time to rejoice as the country became a free, independent, sovereign nation sixty years ago.

Though officially it is 2008 that is designated as the International Year of Planet Earth, the activities for the year will span three years–2007 to 2009 and, therefore, 2007 is important to all those who matter in protecting life on earth and preserving environment and maintaining the ecological balance.

The United Nations has spelt out some strategies for each individual towards achieving the objectives of the International Year. They are, improving the understanding of the evolution of life, from the form of a fish to the intelligent human being; eliminating human health hazards by a better understanding of the medical aspects of the Earth Science; reducing the risks for society caused by natural and human-induced hazards; prompting society to take a greater interest in the Earth Science; discovering new natural resources; and in view of the impending global scarcity of water, to detect deeper and accessible sources of water.

In each of these, everyone will have something to contribute. It is our bounden duty to play our role in arresting the damage done to our environment and ecology.

Let this be our New Year resolution.

The wrong sort of people are always in power because they would not be in power if they were not the wrong sort of people.

- Jon Wynne-Tyson

I always love to begin a journey on Sundays, because I shall have the prayers of the church, to protect all those who travel by land, or by water.

-Jonathan Swift

Visit us at : http://www.chandamama.org

MAIL BAG

This from Shamika K. (10) Chennai:

I am an avid reader of *Chandamama*. This magazine gives pleasure not only to children but adults, too. Every month, I eagerly wait for my copy to arrive. But the magazine is lacking in a page for pen-friends. I wish all the readers of *Chandamama* a very Happy New Year!

This came from a P.G.teacher in Chattisgarh:

I am Dhanalakshmi, working with Kendriya Vidyalaya. When I was in Chennai (Tambaram) from 1994 to 2001, I subscribed for *Chandamama* (Telugu) to help my daughter learn her mother-tongue. She was thoroughly enjoying the stories. When she joined Engineering, I stopped her subscription. She is soon to get married and I am keen to give her all the copies she missed as a wedding gift.

Reader S.N.Chowdhury of Kolkata writes:

In *Chandamama* (Bengali), the stories are about kings and zamindars (tax-collecting landlords). Their rule is undemocratic. The people's lives and affairs depend on the whims of these kings and zamindars. People do not have the right to oppose their unjust activities. Their stories should not be published in a magazine like *Chandamama*. Instead, more stories about people enjoying a democratic rule should find a place in *Chandamama*.

By e-mail from Ravikumar:

I am a new reader. I am really amazed to read *Chandamama*. I am now wondering how I missed the magazine in the past years. I find the magazine very useful for developing communication skill. I am eagerly waiting to see the next issue.

Ms. Sudipta Raul of Balasore writes:

Chandamama often serves the people of the country with a lot of fun and activities. Such an effort of yours must go a long way in making children like me successful in future.

This came from Priyanka Maisnam Imphal, Manipur:

Chandamama helps one to express one's ideas, opinions and talents. I feel great as a fan of *Chandamama*. The Children's Special (November issue) was great. It makes me think that I should try to participate in next year's competition.

Preethi M.Shet of Bangalore has this to say:

I am grateful for the opportunity given to me to participate in your painting competition. I am delighted that my painting was chosen for a prize. I thank you for your encouragement.



NEW TALES OF KING VIKRAM AND THE VETALA

THE MAGICAL SWORD

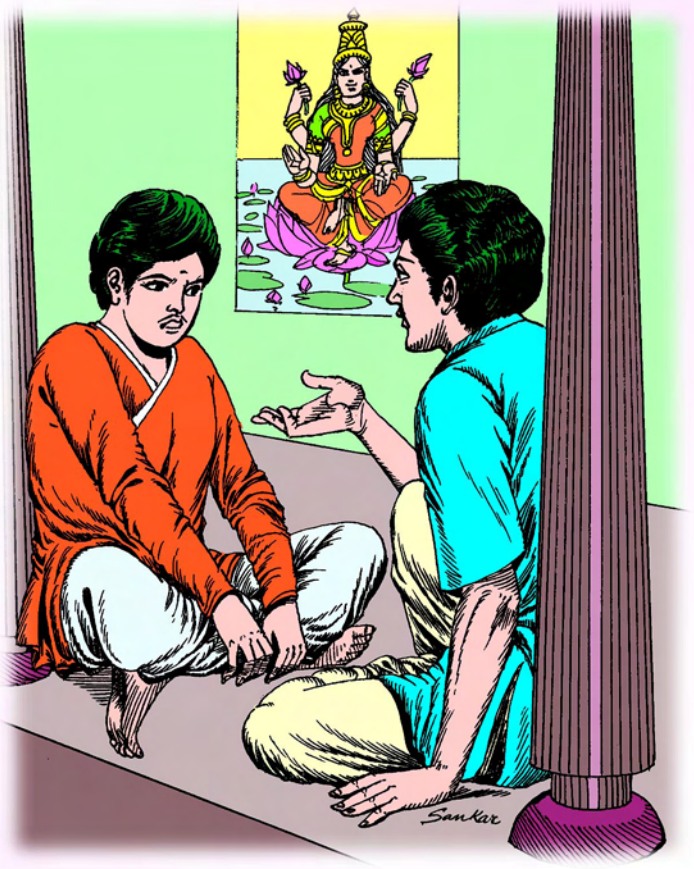


The cremation ground presented an eerie spectacle on that dark night. The moon was hidden behind the clouds, and it was drizzling intermittently. The pitch darkness was relieved only by occasional flashes of lightning that lit up the sombre scene, causing an eerie dance of jerky shadows in the cremation ground. Occasionally, a jackal's spine-chilling howl or the blood-curdling laughter of some invisible evil spirit cut into the silence that hung like a shroud over the area. Altogether, it was a scene that would strike terror into the bravest heart. But nothing could daunt the intrepid King Vikram. Once again, he made his way to the ancient gnarled tree from which the corpse was hanging. Bones crunched under his feet, and a screeching ghost rose from the dust in shuddering frenzy as he marched determinedly ahead.

Oblivious to everything but the mission at hand, he brought the hanging corpse down by cutting the rope with his sword. Slinging it astride his shoulder, he had just begun his return journey when the vampire that possessed the corpse said, "O King! I have never seen anyone as fearless as you are. Without the least heed of personal risk, you are entering this dreaded cremation ground in the dead of night time and time again. Nothing seems to faze you; it is as if Fear itself is afraid of you and keeps his distance! Your courage and tenacity are praiseworthy indeed. I'm reminded of a youth of another time, who struggled against impossible odds, to come up victorious. Listen to his story; perhaps it would inspire you."

The vampire proceeded to narrate the following tale:

Sasank was a young man of Kanakpur village. He was both well educated and trained in the martial arts.



He was especially good at sword-fight. His father had been a rich merchant. Unfortunately, his parents died in an accident when he was in his teens. Subsequently, his father's partners had assumed full control of his flourishing business and swindled the boy of his rightful share of the property. Thus, Sasank was left destitute. He now maintained himself by doing odd jobs.

One day, his friend Jayant called on him. Moved by his plight, he said, "Sasank, you're an expert in sword-fight. With a great future ahead of you, it's a shame that you're wasting your talent by burying yourself in this godforsaken village where there's none to appreciate it! If you move to a city, you'll certainly get the recognition you deserve. Our king holds competitions in archery and sword-play in the capital every Vijayadasami day. I suggest you try your luck there."

Sasank liked the idea. Vijayadasami was just a week away, and the capital, Veerpuri, was quite far from his village. As he had no money to hire a carriage, he would have to travel on foot. So, he had to act immediately. The very next morning, he set out on his journey.

After walking for several miles, he found himself in the midst of a dense jungle. Feeling tired, he stopped to rest under a tree.

Suddenly, he heard a loud scream – "Help! Help! Tiger!"

Sasank sprang to his feet at once. Drawing his sword, he raced towards the source of the sound. He did not have to go far. Before long, he spotted a yogi cowering beneath a tree. A huge, ferocious-looking tiger was crouching a short distance away, ready to pounce upon him.

Brandishing his sword menacingly, Sasank charged at the tiger with a loud yell. The tiger was taken aback, but quickly turned on him. Soon, man and beast were locked in a fierce battle. Midway, Sasank's sword broke. Undaunted, he wrestled with the wounded tiger and eventually killed it with his bare hands.

The yogi, who had been watching all this, hugged Sasank and exclaimed, "Bravo, my boy! You are courageous indeed. You had unhesitatingly risked your life to save a total stranger. That shows your nobility. Your unselfish action deserves a reward."

He pulled out of his bundle lying at his feet a sword in its scabbard. He handed it to Sasank, saying, "This is a sword with magical powers. But you should take care never to use it in an unjust cause, or against a defenceless opponent. If you use it the right way – with courage, honesty and conviction, its powers will come to your aid. Victory shall be yours!"

Sasank accepted the sword gratefully and bade him goodbye and continued on his journey.

After travelling for several days, he finally reached Veerpuri a day before Vijayadasami. He repaired to an inn for the night, intending to present himself at the palace the next morning.

To his dismay, he learnt from the innkeeper that the elimination rounds of the competitions were already over. Apparently, a young warrior named Chakradhar, who hailed from a noble family, distantly related to the king, had won the sword-fighting contest by defeating all the other contestants.

All had been greatly impressed by his performance,

and the king was going to honour him at a special function the next day.

Although disappointed, Sasank was by no means dejected. He decided to go to the palace and try his luck anyway.

The next morning, just as the king was about to honour Chakradhar at a packed arena, Sasank walked up to him and said, "My lord, pardon me for coming in late. But I'm a swordsman from a distant province, and I would like to pit my skill against that of Chakradhar." He then drew out his sword.

This new development irritated Chakradhar, and he shouted angrily, "Who's this fellow? He looks like a country bumpkin. If he wishes to be trounced at my hands, I've no objection!"

"And what if you're defeated?" asked Sasank quietly.

On hearing this, Chakradhar looked as if he was having an apoplectic fit. His eyes bulged and his face went red with fury. For a moment he was dumbfounded. Then, finding his voice, he thundered:

"If I'm defeated, I shall leave this kingdom!"

The contest began. The spectators, who fully expected a walk-over for Chakradhar, were astonished at the mettle displayed by the unknown warrior. Even a trained fighter like Chakradhar was no match for his obvious dexterity.

Seconds into the fight, Chakradhar's sword was knocked out of his hands and sent flying in a wide arc, to finally land with a clang on the floor at one end of the arena.

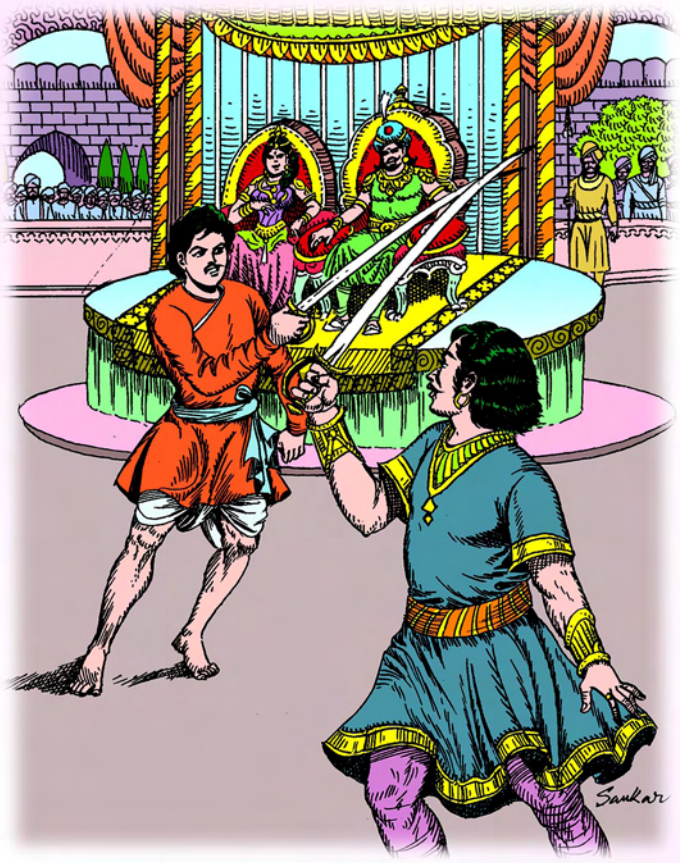
The arena erupted into a pandemonium as all the onlookers rose to their feet and applauded as one man. The king and the royal family members were also seen applauding the stranger.

The next moment, Chakradhar stormed out of the palace, never to be seen again.

The people of the capital hailed Sasank with great fervour and the king, in a glittering ceremony, conferred on him the title of 'Best Swordsman'.

The king asked Sasank to meet him in the royal garden later in the evening.

The king repaired to his chamber and requested his



queen, his only daughter, and his minister to join him. He then asked them, "What do you think about this youth, Sasank? There's no doubt that he's an excellent warrior. He's also robust and looks handsome. But he comes from a remote village; so, perhaps he may be uneducated."

The minister said, "No, sire! He is staying at an inn nearby. I sent my men after him to make secret enquiries about him. I find he is from an aristocratic family. Unfortunately, he lost all his wealth after the untimely death of his parents. I understand that he's well-trained in all martial arts. He came here seeking his fortune, hoping to get a job by virtue of his skills."

The king said, "As you all know, my daughter is the crown princess of the kingdom and the one to marry her would get the throne. I had announced earlier that she would be married to the winner of the sword-fighting contest. At that time, I had no doubt that Chakradhar would be the winner. But now, after this turn of circumstances, I feel that Sasank deserves her hand more. What do you say?"

All, including the princess, were happy with this

proposal. It only remained to meet Sasank and break the happy news to him.

It was evening and the king, along with the others, was waiting for Sasank in the garden.

Just then, the chief of the king's spies approached him and said in a low voice, "Sire, I'm afraid I have some bad news for you. One of my men has just brought me the information that Chakradhar is mobilising the people at the frontiers of our kingdom to revolt against you. Apparently, he is instigating the people by telling them that Sasank won the fight unfairly by using a magic sword obtained from a yogi, and that he does not deserve to become the king's heir. Chakradhar intends to seize the throne and marry the princess himself."

On hearing this, the king turned pale. He muttered, "It is shocking that one of my own men – one whom I trusted implicitly – has turned against me!"

The minister now smilingly spoke up, in a reassuring tone, "Don't worry, your majesty! Chakradhar's propaganda is going to harm no one but himself. There'll be no threat to our kingdom. In fact, we're going to benefit from his misrepresentation. As word spreads that the crown-princess's fiancé possesses a sword with magic powers, our enemy kings won't dare even to look in our direction! So, all's well that ends well. If both the parties agree, we can go ahead with the marriage."

Concluding the story at this point, the vampire demanded, "O King, how could the minister make such an unrealistic claim? It may sound convincing, but there's no truth in it! Secondly, how did Chakradhar come to know of Sasank's magic sword? The transaction that took place between the yogi and Sasank in the middle of the forest was a secret one, wasn't it? If you know the answer, speak out – otherwise, your head shall shatter into fragments!"

Without any hesitation, King Vikram promptly answered, "There is nothing unrealistic or untrue about the minister's claim. It is quite true that hostile neighbours would think twice before launching an attack on a kingdom whose ruler was known to possess a magic sword capable of winning any battle. Thus, the magic sword was indeed a strategic asset not only for Sasank but for the whole kingdom! Coming to your second question, Chakradhar merely cooked up a story to discredit his rival and justify his own defeat in the contest. It was just a coincidence that the story of the magic sword happened to be true! Anyway, there is no doubt that Sasank thoroughly deserved to win the contest as well as the throne. Chakradhar's strategy of defaming his rival is unbecoming of a warrior, and shows him in very poor light."

On hearing this, the vampire nodded in approval, before going off into peal after peal of thunderous laughter. The next moment he, along with the corpse, moved off the king's shoulder with a jerk and flew back to the tree. King Vikram gave a little sigh as he gazed upon the scene. Then, he squared his shoulders and retraced his steps towards the tree.



indiascope

KITE FESTIVAL



An outdoor sport, other than any of the ball games, which children–especially boys–love is kite-flying. Though its origin is unknown, it is generally believed that Huen Tsang (not the Chinese traveller who visited India in the 7th century), flew a kite to scare away the army of the Han dynasty! This happened in 200 B.C. Between 100 B.C. and A.D. 500, kites were used for sending signals. Around A.D. 930, there was a mention of *Shi*(paper) *roshi* (bird) in Japanese literature.

In India, the word *patang* (originating from Sanskrit *pataka* or flag) appears in a work called "Madhumati" written by Manzan in 1542. In the Kite Museum in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, the invention of kite is attributed to man's desire to fly.

The kite has a great significance to the people of Gujarat where the Kite Festival is a major annual event in January, coming off on Makar Sankranti day–January 14. Kites are flown from open grounds or terraces or rooftops as a ritual right from dawn to sunset and beyond. At night illuminated box-kites are flown adding splendour to the dark sky. The Kite Festival is held all over Gujarat. Word seems to have spread about the Kite Festival which attracted participants from China, Japan and other countries to Gujarat. The first International Kite Festival was held in Ahmedabad in 1989.

For those religious-minded, the festival is an occasion of thanksgiving. It is believed that the gods awaken on that day after a 6-month long slumber, and the gates of heaven are thrown open. Naturally, it is a time for merry-making.

Makar Sankranti is an important day for people in all the states south of the Vindhyas. In Kerala, devotees flock to the Ayyappa temple at Sabarimala to watch the phenomenon known as *Makara Jyoti*. In Tamilnadu, it is the time for Pongal which is a four day festival. In Andhra Pradesh farmers throw a feast for the farm hands. It is called Pedda Panduga. In Maharashtra, married women exchange *haldi-kumkum* made of turmeric powder. In Karnataka, bulls and cows are decorated and taken in procession.



From the pen of
RUSKIN BOND

THE TREMOR

Grandfather did not notice anything because he was splashing about and singing; but Grandmother, who was in the garden trimming her rose bushes, paused in her work and looked up. Why were the birds silent all of a sudden? Not only the birds in the trees, but the birds in the hen-house, too. And the goat had stopped nibbling at the geraniums. And the dog, who had been yapping at a squirrel on the wall, sat down quietly, ears turned behind, head between his paws.

"Now, isn't that funny," said Grandmother aloud. "I wonder what..."

And then the opposite happened. The hens began cackling, the dog barking, and the birds shrieking and flapping their wings. The crows in the neighbourhood all took wing, wheeling wildly overhead and cawing loudly. The chickens flapped around in circles, as if they were being chased. Two cats sitting on the wall suddenly jumped up and disappeared in opposite directions.

Grandmother had read somewhere that animals sense the approach of an earthquake much quicker than humans. And true enough, within half a minute of her noticing the noise made by the animals, she heard a rattling, rumbling sound, like an approaching express train.

The noise increased for about a minute and then there was the first trembling of the ground. The animals by this time all seemed to have gone mad and were making a hideous noise. Tree-tops lashed backwards and forwards, doors banged and windows shook, and Grandmother said later that the house actually swayed in front of her. She had difficulty in standing straight, although she admitted later that this might have been due more to the trembling of her knees than to the trembling of the ground.



This first shock lasted only about half a minute, but it seemed much longer. Grandmother realized that Grandfather was in his bath, Rakesh was on his way to school, Mukesh was playing marbles with Mumtaz's son, and Dolly was under the staircase busy with her doll's house; Mumtaz would be in the kitchen washing vegetables. Grandmother rushed indoors to fetch Dolly.

As she did so, the rumble grew louder. Grandfather did not hear it because he was still singing; but Grandmother heard it, and so did Dolly, who also noticed that her doll's house was beginning to totter. Along with the rumble, Mumtaz heard the rattle of crockery. A teapot slithered off the sideboard and fell to the floor in pieces. In the sitting-room, an antique vase (three hundred years old, according to Grandfather), leapt off the mantelpiece and crashed to the ground.

When Dolly felt the first tremor, she instictively crawled under the well of the staircase, dragging her favourite doll with her. All of the doll's hair had long since come out, and so had one eye, but Dolly



had had the doll a long time and felt she needed special care and attention. She could not understand why the house was shaking, but she wasn't afraid. Houses just shook sometimes, she guessed.

Grandmother did not see her under the staircase and dashed into the drawing-room, calling, "Dolly, Dolly! Where are you?" The clock on the wall went crazy and began striking all hours.

In the kitchen, Mumtaz was trying to catch plates, glasses and dishes as they sprang madly from the shelves. Mukesh had lost all his marbles, not in a game with his friends. They had rolled out of the gate and down the road and then disappeared into the ground, where a number of fissures had appeared.

Grandfather stopped singing when he found he couldn't manage the high notes. He noticed that his bathtub was almost empty. Surely he hadn't splashed so much! He reached for the mug, but couldn't find it. He started getting out of the tub, but the tub itself rose up and pitched him out on the flooded bathroom floor.

"A ghost!" exclaimed Grandfather. "There's a mischievous ghost in here, playing tricks with the tub!"

He grabbed his towel and wrapped it round his waist, then flung open the bathroom door and dashed on to the landing.

By that time, the first earthquake tremor was over.

Rakesh was halfway to school when he found his cycle swerving about on the road, out of his control. He almost collided with a bullock-cart.

He dismounted to see if the cycle-chain had jammed. He found the road as unsteady as the bicycle! But this sensation lasted just a few seconds. Everything was steady again. Strangely, though, the bullocks were refusing to move on.

"Did you feel that?" asked the cart-driver.

"Yes, everything was shaking," said Rakesh. "Was it an earthquake?"

"A small one," said the driver. "Or the start of a big one!"

Rakesh rode on to school. The bell had yet to ring for classes, and the field was a ferment of excitement, as the assembled boys and girls stood around in groups talking about the shock that had just been felt. The headmaster had decided that, just in case there was another tremor, the children would be safer out in the open than inside the rather ancient school building; and so he delayed the ringing of the assembly bell. Naturally, the children were delighted at the delay. But when nothing further happened in the next fifteen minutes, the headmaster decided it was time for classes. There were groans of protest, followed by calls for a holiday. Rakesh was the spokesman for his class.

"Sir, you gave us a holiday last year when the roof blew off!"



"But today the roof has not blown off," observed the Headmaster.

"What if the walls fall down?"

"When the walls fall, we will think about a holiday," snapped the Headmaster. "Now into class, all of you!"

❖ ❖ ❖

"Couldn't have a proper bath," grumbled Grandfather. "There wasn't enough water in the tub!"

"Didn't you feel it?" asked Grandmother.

"Feel what?"

"The earthquake."

"Didn't feel a thing. You must have imagined it."

"Well, most of the crockery is broken, as well as that vase you brought back from Burma. You can eat your lunch out of a banana leaf, or use Dolly's toy tea-set."

"Where are Mukesh and Dolly?"

"Dolly's under the staircase again. It's her favourite place. Mukesh is playing outside with Mumtaz's eldest boy. That tremor didn't seem to bother them. But I hope that shock didn't cause any damage at Rakesh's school."

"Couldn't have...we hardly felt it."

"*You* never notice anything when you're in the bath. Everyone else felt it–including the hens! They've suffered a nervous breakdown and won't lay eggs for days."

Going round the house, Grandmother noticed several cracks in the walls and pointed them out to Grandfather.

"They were there before," said Grandfather. "They've been there for years."

"Well, I hadn't noticed them before. Anyway, it's time we left this house. It's much too big and costs too much to look after."

"I suppose we can go and settle down in Calcutta. But you won't enjoy living in a small flat. And you're not used to crowds."

"I was thinking of another hill-station where they don't have earthquakes. We could sell this place, and buy or rent a cottage in Darjeeling or Kalimpong."

"Then pray we don't have another earthquake," said Grandfather. "No one's going to buy a ruin."

They heard Mukesh shouting in the garden.

"He's up to some mischief as usual," grumbled Grandmother, going out to see what all the noise was about.

Mukesh had found a nest and several broken eggs on the lawn, and was shouting because he was being attacked by a pair of angry thrushes.

"What did you do to that nest?" demanded Grandmother.

"Nothing!" said Mukesh. "It fell out of the tree when everything began to shake!"

"That must have been what happened. But keep away from the nest, or those birds will really go for you!"

The dog Pickle had been running about looking for whoever had caused all the commotion. He and the neighbour's dog began barking at each other, at the doorsteps. "How dare you rock my house!" they seemed to be saying. Eventually tiring of the argument, Pickle went into the store-room, looking for rats. He was good at catching rats.

(To continue...)

A Parable from Swami Ramtheerth - 1

FAITH CAN DO MIRACLES

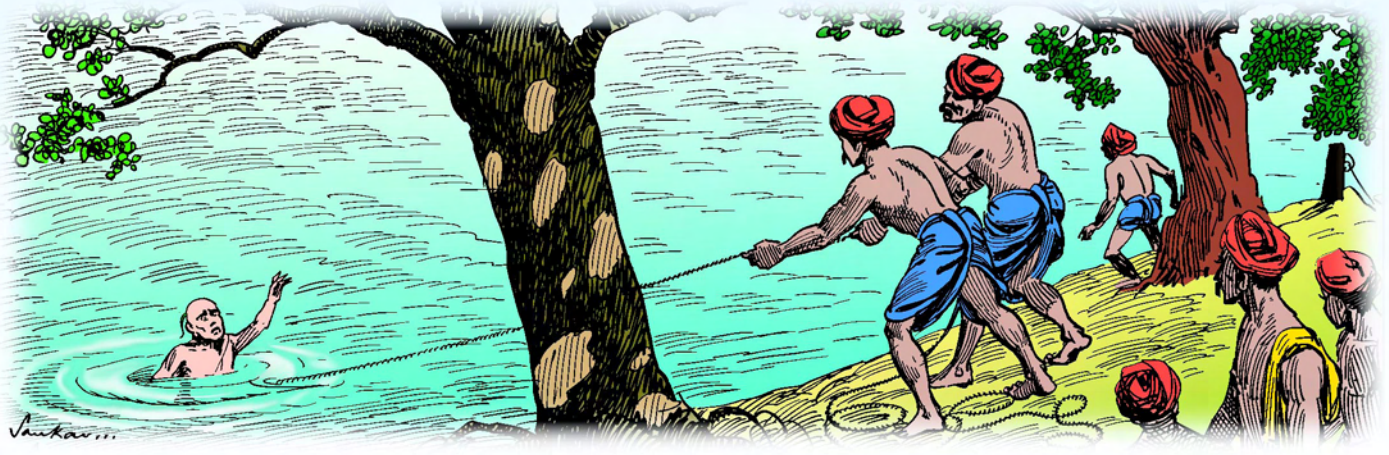
A learned scholar of the village was holding a discourse from the verandah of his house. There was a large gathering intently listening to his speech. The theme was the Omkara *manthra*. "If you keep on chanting *Aum* with implicit faith, you can even perform miracles. Why, crossing a river will be just child's play! Go on chanting *aum* and you'll be able even to walk on water!" He paused for a few moments to look at the faces of the people in the congregation. They were looking at each other in wonderment.

A group of milkmaids from the adjacent village, returning after selling buttermilk, happened to hear what he said about *aum*. They did not stop by to listen to the rest of the speech, but moved away as they were in a hurry to get back home. However, they decided that they would not take a boat to cross the river, but try walking on the water chanting *aum*. When they reached the river, they kept chanting aloud the *aum* manthra, and just walked! Though illiterate, they had such faith in what they heard from the scholar that they confidently walked on the water. As they proceeded towards their village, they were only thinking of the money they had saved by avoiding a boat journey. The next day, they did not take a boat either way and crossed the river, walking on the water chanting *aum*.

This went on for the next few days and their faith in the miracle of *aum* only increased. The milkmaids were happy that they could save some money which they could otherwise spend for their family. They decided that they should collectively entertain the scholar to express their gratitude. One day, on their way back, they met the scholar and invited him to their home. They did not tell him about the miracle they had experienced. They said one of them would escort him to their village.

Later, when the scholar and milkmaid reached the river, he said, "Let's take a boat." The milkmaid said, "No need for a boat, sir, we shall chant '*aum*' and walk on the water." While the scholar hesitated, the milkmaid confidently started chanting *aum* and walked on the river. The scholar called a villagers and asked him to bring a long rope. He tied it around his waist and, asking two villagers to hold the other end, and pull him out to safety if he were to see him sinking he stepped on the water. He was about to sink when he was saved.

The person who preached others about the power of Omkara did not have any faith in what he preached, while the simple milkmaids, who had merely followed his advice were benefited.



FATHER

King Ghyas-ud-din reigned for 31 years. His death is one of the most brutal and pathetic episodes in the history of Mandu. And yet it also shows how no one can get away with an evil deed and ultimately has to pay the price of sin.

When Ghyas-ud-din became king, he immediately yielded full power to his eldest son Nasir-ud-din, because he wanted a quiet life for himself. Nasir-ud-din was the exact opposite of his father. He had a harsh temperament and a violent temper that refused to see reason. He drank excessively and thought nothing of killing anyone who did not please him.

Once, when he fell into a tank in a drunken state and was rescued by his attendants who asked him to be more careful, he was so angry with them for daring to criticise him that he had them put to death. As a result, everyone was terrified of him. Indeed, it is difficult to understand how Ghyas-ud-din could remain so blind to his son's faults and yet nominate him as his successor, giving him so much power.



"Sire, Prince Nasir is not suitable for this responsibility," his advisors told Ghyas-ud-din again and again. But he refused to listen. He wanted to enjoy himself quietly and did not want the responsibility of looking after a kingdom.

"He is young yet," he told them glibly, "give him a chance. I'm sure he will rise to the occasion when his time actually comes."

"But it is not wise to give him so much power," they warned him.

"It won't hurt him," said Ghyas-ud-din, "after all, he will be king some day. Let him get used to it."

Unfortunately Ghyas-ud-din had to pay dearly for his mistake.

Nasir-ud-din enjoyed all the powers of a king and did whatever he pleased. And yet he bitterly resented the presence of his father, now slowly getting aged. He wanted Ghyas-ud-din out of the way because he was not satisfied with merely enjoying the advantages of being the uncrowned king. He was quite crazy to sit on his father's throne and listen to people addressing him 'your majesty'.

Twice he tried to poison his father. Knowing that Ghyas-ud-din did not drink alcohol, he mixed it in a glass of fruit *sherbet*. "Go and give this to the king. Tell him I have made it especially for him." But his attempt failed because all kings carried a poison antidote (*zahar muhra*) with them in those days. So did Ghyas-ud-din. Moreover, Nasir's hatred for his father was so obvious that Ghyas-ud-din realised what he was after and threw away the poisoned sherbet on both occasions. Finally, Nasir decided to

AND SON

take destiny into his own hands and carried the cup of poison himself.

"What is it, Nasir?" asked Ghyas-ud-din surprised to see his son in his room. As a rule he never went near his father. "Why did you not drink the sherbet I sent you earlier?" he asked angrily.

"But I did," said Ghyas-ud-din.

"I don't believe you," said Nasir. "Anyway, you are going to drink this sherbet right now. I won't leave this room until you do."

Ghyas-ud-din looked at his son and read the greed and ambition in his eyes. But despite knowing everything, he wanted to protect his son from the sin of being his father's murderer. He took the cup from Nasir. Then he slowly took off the *zahar muhra* from his arm and threw it on the floor. He knelt down for the last time and breathed his last prayer to God: "O Lord Almighty! My time has arrived and I have passed my years in prosperity and happiness rarely attained by any king. Now, since this is my last prayer, I beg on my knees that thou shalt not blame my son Nasir as my murderer; that thou shalt take my death as something destined by thee and will not avenge it." After speaking these words he drank the cup of poisoned sherbet in one gulp and delivered his soul to his creator.

This episode has been taken from the *Memoirs of Jahangir,* who keenly felt the pathos of the situation and the utter shamefulness of Nasir's conduct. He also writes about how Sher Afghan felt about it : "When Sher Afghan came to the tomb of Nasir-ud-din during his reign, he ordered the tomb to be beaten up with sticks because of what Nasir did to his father." Jahangir, who loved his own father dearly, adds: "When I went to Nasir's tomb, I too gave it several kicks."

Was Nasir punished for his sin? Indeed he was, because ever since he crowned himself on November 20, 1590, he had a miserable time. All his time was spent in attending to domestic feuds. His guilty conscience gave him no peace. Having killed his own father, he suspected his own sons of similar design. He treated them so badly that his eldest son Shihab-ud-din went away to Delhi and refused to return to Mandu. Nasir-ud-din contracted a painful desease and died soon after.

After his death, his third son Mahmud became the king. Nasir-ud-din had also built one beautiful palace but it came to be known as Baaz Bahadur's palace, because Baaz Bahadur lived there after he became the King of Mandu. Even now people call it that; hardly anyone remembers that it was originally built by Nasir-ud-din, which is good, because they associate the palace with a romantic character and not a wicked one.

- Swapna Dutta



SCIENCE FAIR

- By Rosscote Krishna Pillai



JANUARY-BORN: ROBERT BOYLE

Robert Boyle, proponent of a fundamental law in physics, named after him, and in the main considered as the first modern chemist, was born on January 25, 1627 in Munster, Ireland. He was the seventh son and 14th child of Richard Boyle, the first Earl of Cork. He was first educated at home by a tutor. He had a flair for languages and had become well-versed in Latin, Greek and French. At the age of eight he was admitted in the public school of Eton. At eleven, he travelled through Europe with his tutor and at 15, he was in Italy studying the works of Galileo, who had died just a few days earlier.

On his father's death in 1645, Robert, then 18, inherited a huge manor and large estates. From then on he devoted most of his life to the pursuit of science. Almost a decade later, in 1654, he moved to Oxford and settled there. He was wholly absorbed in making a number of scientific equipment and conducting a number of experiments. He devised an improved air-pump and with it investigated the properties of air, to arrive, in 1660, at the basic law, better known as Boyle's Law in the English-speaking world. It states that for a fixed mass of gas at constant temperature, the pressure and volume are inversely proportional, which means that the volume(V) of gas will be halved if its pressure (p) is doubled; that is, pV=constant.

Boyle also made many other significant contributions to chemistry and physics. Initially, he was an alchemist and believed in the possibility of transmuting other metals into gold. But later he gave up such ideas and was of the firm belief that knowledge should be acquired for its own sake. With the publication of his book, *The Sceptical Chymist*, in 1661, he initiated the study of modern chemistry as a separate science. In it he defined an element as any substance that could not be further broken down into simpler substances and that elements could be combined into compounds which could be again divided into their elements.

Boyle understood the difference between mixtures and compounds and devised a process for detecting their ingredients. He was the first to distinguish between acids, bases and neutral substances. He also studied the chemistry of combustion and respiration and carried out experiments in physiology. In physics, he showed that water expanded when it froze and the role of air in propagating sound. He also conducted experiments in hydrostatics and on specific gravities, in electricity, on refractive powers, crystals, colour, etc.

In 1663, when the now-famous Royal Society of London was formed, Boyle became a member of the council at its inception and was elected its president in 1680 but declined the honour. He also refused the offer of a peerage. Throughout his life he was of very poor health and had never married. He died in London on December 30, 1691 at the age of 64.



THE INFANT UNIVERSE



How did the Universe appear in the early stages of its formation? John C. Mather (60) of NASA Goddard Space Flight Centre, Maryland, and George F. Smoot (61) of Lawrence Berkely National Laboratory of the University of California, who jointly won the Nobel Prize in Physics in 2006, discovered how the Universe looked about 389,000 years after it was born and how galaxies, stars, planets, etc, were formed. The chairman of the Nobel committee for physics described it as "one of the greatest discoveries of the century".

The direct quantitative evidence got by the two American scientists through the Cosmic Background Explorer (COBE) satellite launched by NASA on November 18, 1989 confirmed the predictions made by the "Big Bang" theory about the creation of the universe. According to this theory, the Universe at its beginning was an unimaginably dense and hot point of matter and energy. In the first submicrosecond, it exploded and resulted in the emission of an incredibly intensive radiation. radiation is called "blackbody radiation" and the shape of its spectrum is called "blackbody spectrum".

Since the Big Bang, the Universe has been continuously expanding . As a result the cosmic background radiation cooled down and resulted in its wavelengths increasing and developing into the microwave area (the wavelengths of visible light are much shorter than those of microwaves) while, however, conserving the original blackbody shape of its spectrum. The COBE measurements revealed a perfect blackbody spectrum of the background radiation, a remnant of the infant universe.

EINSTEIN ANECDOTES

When Albert Einstein was 2-1/2 years old, his sister Maja was born. The boy was told that he would now have something to play with. Looking intently at the baby, he asked, "Yes, but where are its wheels?"

❖ ❖ ❖

Once Albert Einstein was invited by Charlie Chaplin to the premiere of his film *City Lights*. The people who had come to see the film cheered them both. Chaplin at once remarked, "They cheer me because they all understand me, and they cheer you because no one understands you."

SCIENCE QUIZ



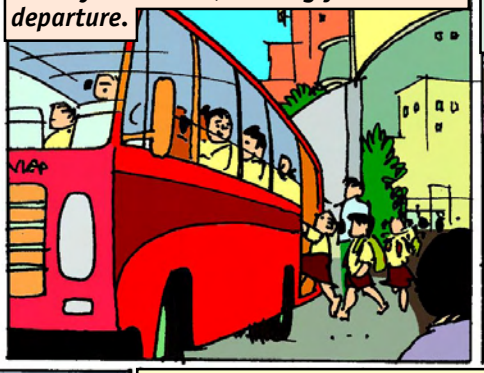
1. Who was the first person to come out of a spacecraft while orbiting in space?
   a) Armstrong; b)Leonov; c)Gagarin; d) Collins
2. Which living bird has the largest wing span?
   a)Eagle; b)Ostrich; c)Wandering Albatross: d)Kiwi
3. Which is the element with atomic number 102 named after the inventor of dynamite?
   a)Niobium; b)Neptunium; c)Nobelium; d)Neodymium
4. Of all substances, which has the lowest boiling point?
   a)Hydrogen; b)Nitrogen; c)Mercury; d)Helium
5. In which subject did India-born Har Gobind Khorana get the Nobel Prize in 1968?
   a) Chemistry; b)Physics; c)Medicine-physiology; d)Literature.

ANSWER: 1. b)Leonov, 2. c)Wandering Albatross, 3. c)Nobelium, 4. d)Helium, 5. c)Medicine-physiology

The Fearless Four

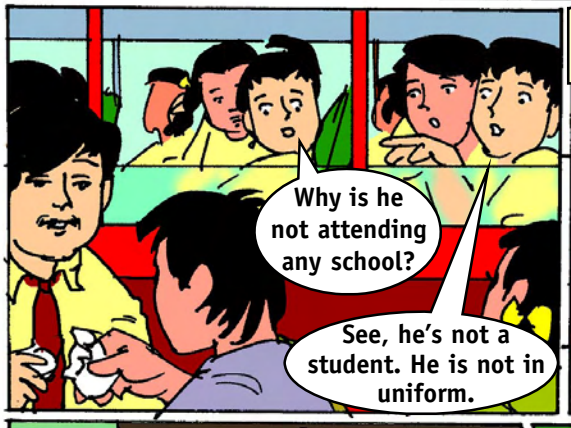
ORPHANAGE SAVED!

School is over. Deepak and friends are already in the bus, waiting for its departure.

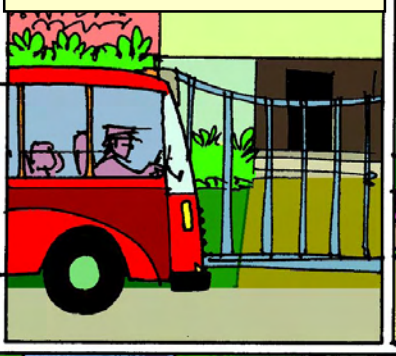


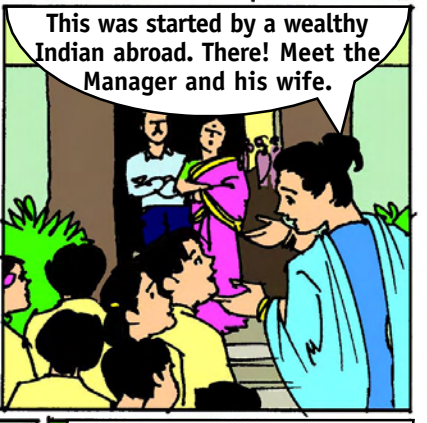
Deepak notices a boy of his age on the roadside selling something to one of the boys of his school.





The next day, Deepak's class visits a children's orphanage.











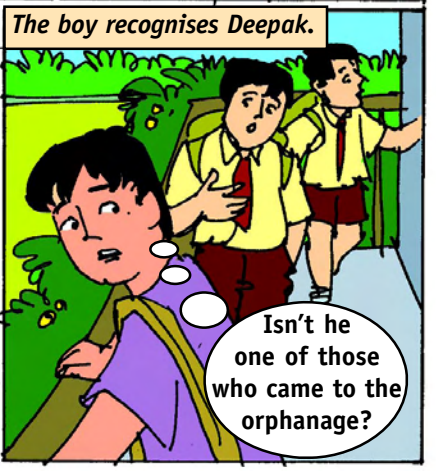
Next morning, as Deepak and friends get down from the bus, they see the same boy near the school.

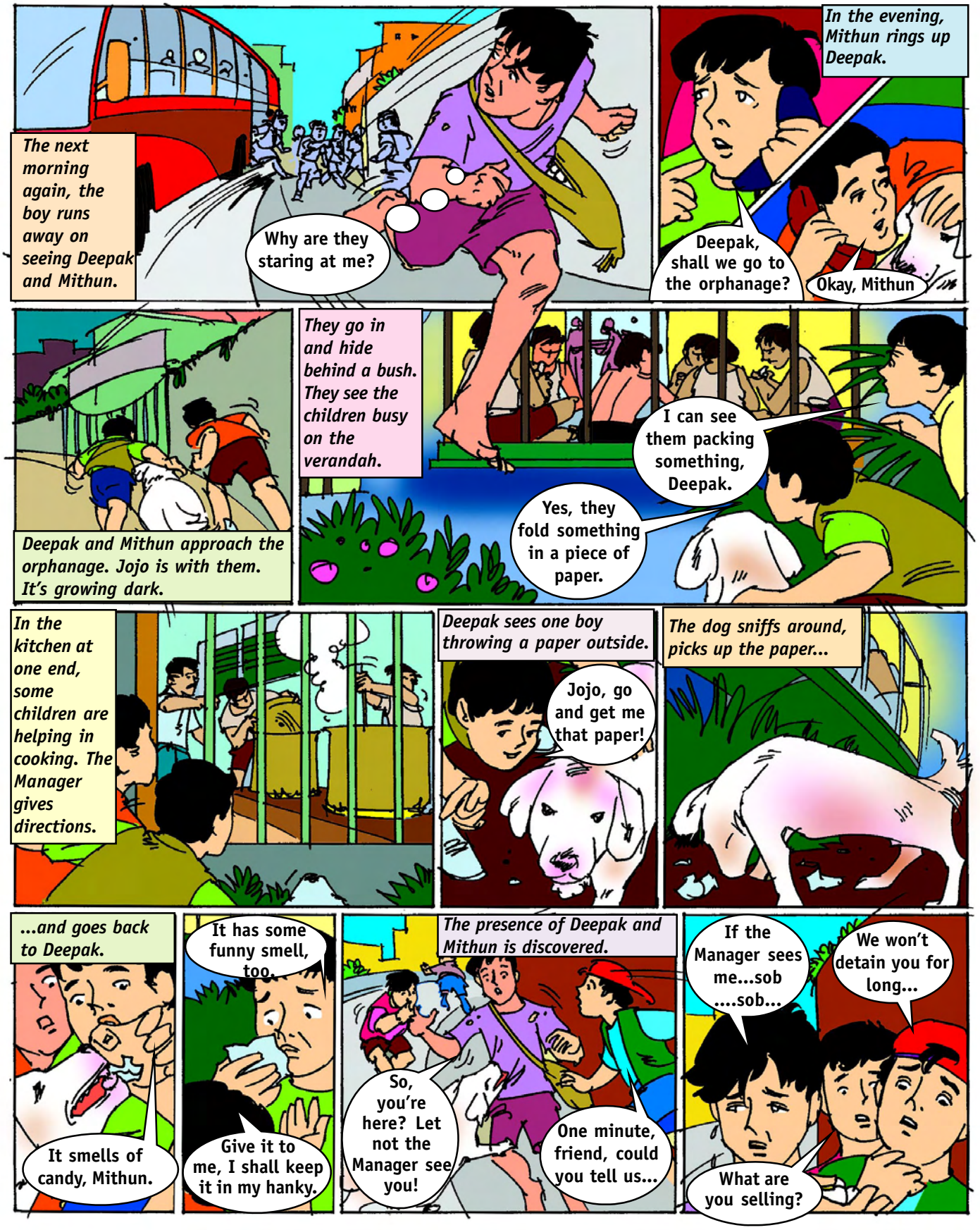


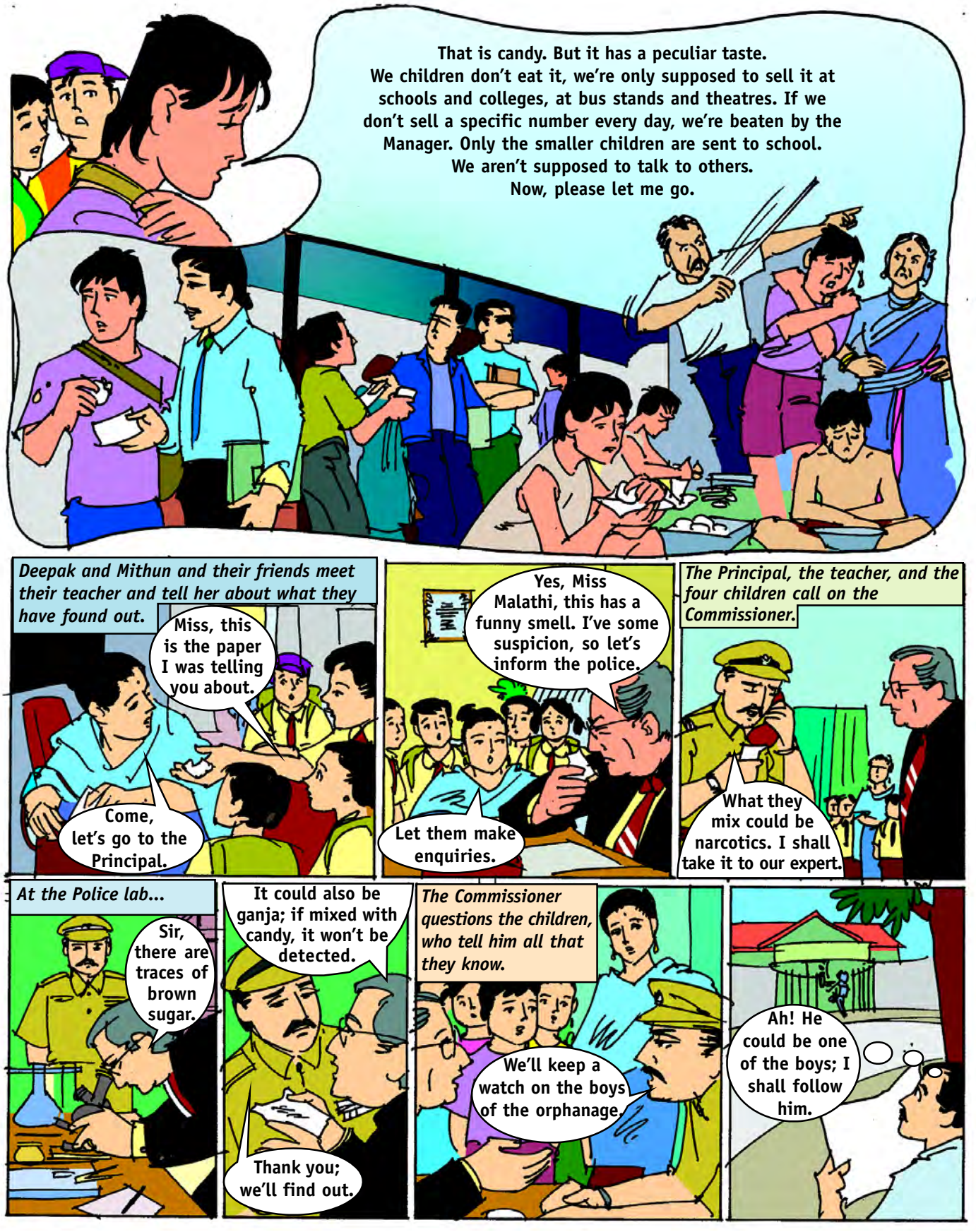
The boy runs away. A master gets down from the bus.

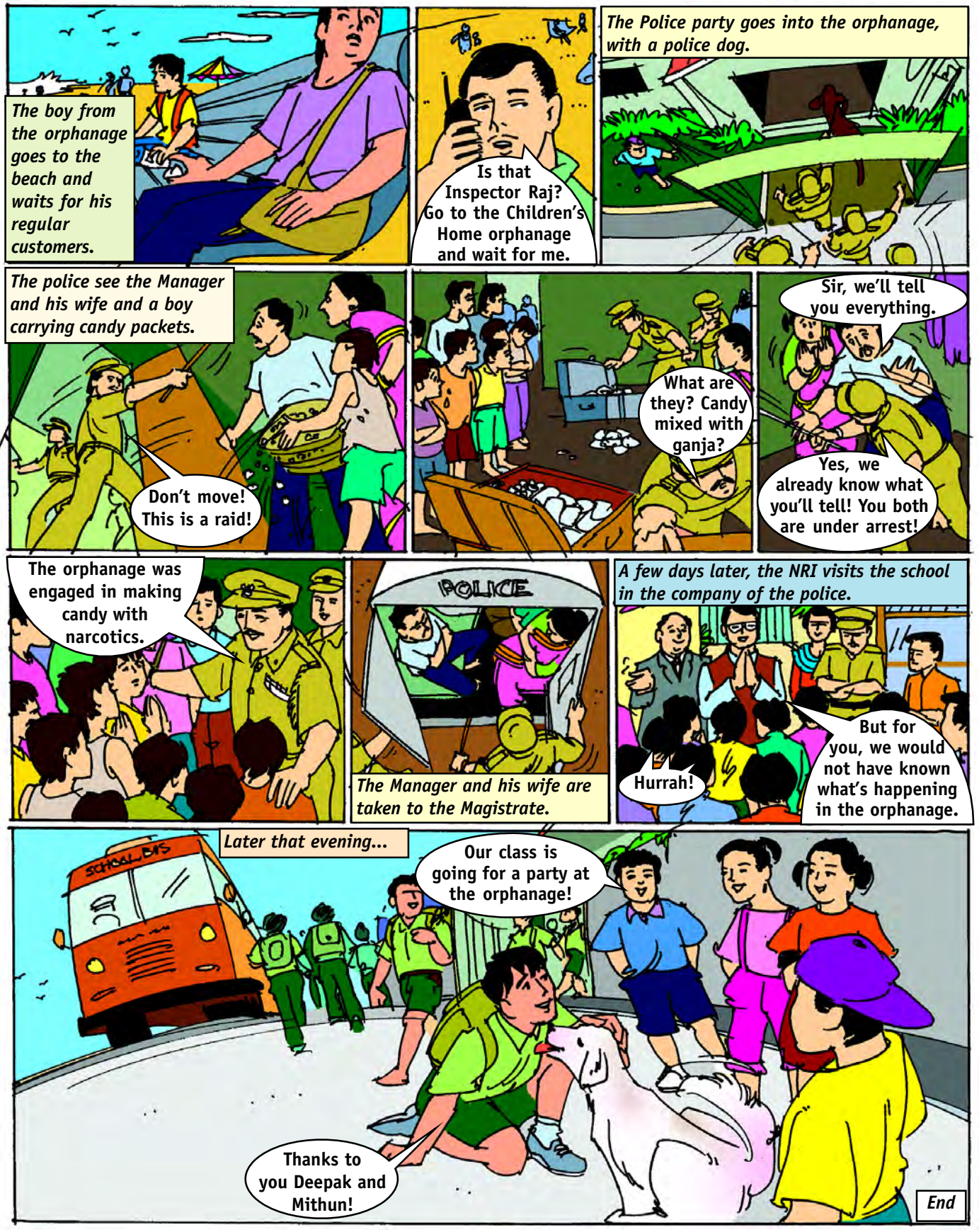


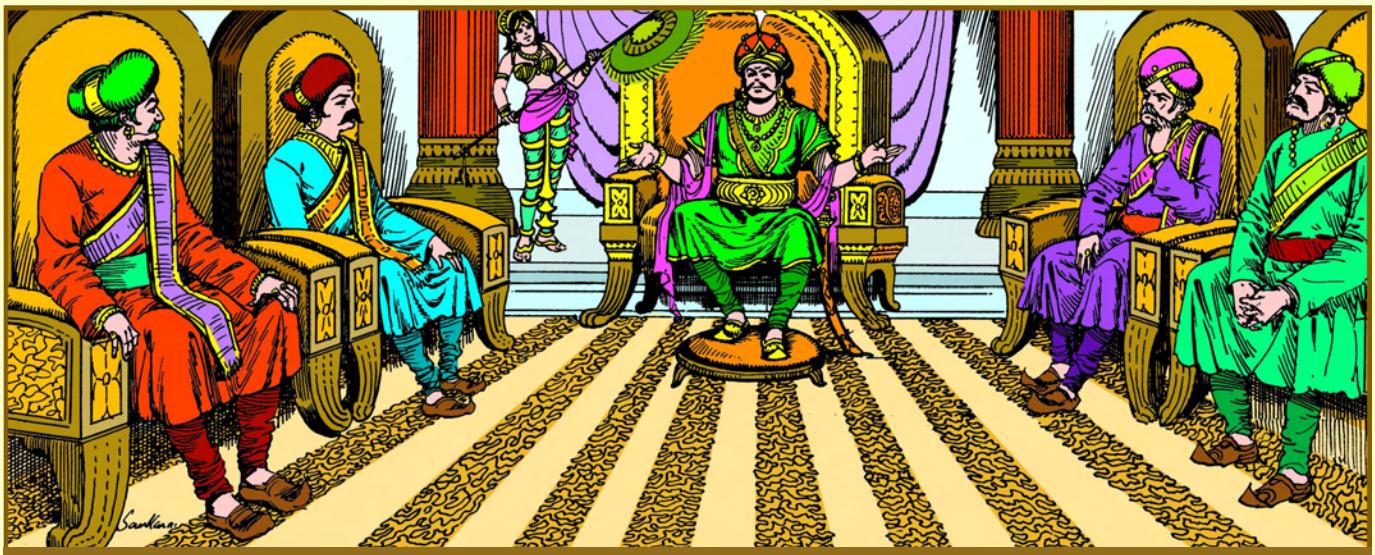
The boy recognises Deepak.




The next morning again, the boy runs away on seeing Deepak and Mithun.
Why are they staring at me?
In the evening, Mithun rings up Deepak.
Deepak, shall we go to the orphanage?
Okay, Mithun
Deepak and Mithun approach the orphanage. Jojo is with them. It's growing dark.
They go in and hide behind a bush. They see the children busy on the verandah.
I can see them packing something, Deepak.
Yes, they fold something in a piece of paper.
In the kitchen at one end, some children are helping in cooking. The Manager gives directions.
Deepak sees one boy throwing a paper outside.
Jojo, go and get me that paper!
The dog sniffs around, picks up the paper...
...and goes back to Deepak.
It smells of candy, Mithun.
It has some funny smell, too.
Give it to me, I shall keep it in my hanky.
The presence of Deepak and Mithun is discovered.
So, you're here? Let not the Manager see you!
One minute, friend, could you tell us...
If the Manager sees me...sob ....sob...
We won't detain you for long...
What are you selling?


That is candy. But it has a peculiar taste. We children don't eat it, we're only supposed to sell it at schools and colleges, at bus stands and theatres. If we don't sell a specific number every day, we're beaten by the Manager. Only the smaller children are sent to school. We aren't supposed to talk to others. Now, please let me go.
Deepak and Mithun and their friends meet their teacher and tell her about what they have found out.
Miss, this is the paper I was telling you about.
Come, let's go to the Principal.
Yes, Miss Malathi, this has a funny smell. I've some suspicion, so let's inform the police.
Let them make enquiries.
The Principal, the teacher, and the four children call on the Commissioner.
What they mix could be narcotics. I shall take it to our expert.
At the Police lab...
Sir, there are traces of brown sugar.
It could also be ganja; if mixed with candy, it won't be detected.
Thank you; we'll find out.
The Commissioner questions the children, who tell him all that they know.
We'll keep a watch on the boys of the orphanage.
Ah! He could be one of the boys; I shall follow him.


The boy from the orphanage goes to the beach and waits for his regular customers.
Is that Inspector Raj? Go to the Children's Home orphanage and wait for me.
The Police party goes into the orphanage, with a police dog.
The police see the Manager and his wife and a boy carrying candy packets.
Don't move! This is a raid!
What are they? Candy mixed with ganja?
Sir, we'll tell you everything.
Yes, we already know what you'll tell! You both are under arrest!
The orphanage was engaged in making candy with narcotics.
POLICE
The Manager and his wife are taken to the Magistrate.
A few days later, the NRI visits the school in the company of the police.
Hurrah!
But for you, we would not have known what's happening in the orphanage.
Later that evening...
SCHOOL BUS
Our class is going for a party at the orphanage!
Thanks to you Deepak and Mithun!
End



SELF-CRITICISM

When Brahmadutta was ruling Banaras, Bodhisattva was born as the King of Indraprastha. His name was Dhananjaya. During his rule the people were completely free from misery such as floods and famines, and were very happy. Dhananjaya's righteousness and philanthropy were widely known all over the continent.

At that time, King Kalinga ruled the country from his capital Dantapur. One year, there was famine in that kingdom due to drought. Hunger stalked the land. Many children perished in the arms of their mothers. The entire populace lost its nerve. This state of affairs upset King Kalinga very much. He called his ministers and asked them, "What can be the reason for the failure of rains in our land this year? What should we do to get over this menace of famine?"

"O King," they replied, "when we stray from the path of righteousness, such calamities occur. For instance, King Dhananjaya of Indraprastha never deviates from the path of virtue. No calamity has ever visited his kingdom. It rains there thrice a month, and the people are exceedingly happy."

"In that case," King Kalinga told his ministers, ''go and meet King Dhananjaya, get him to write down the virtues he adopts in his rule on leaves of gold, and bring them to me. I, too, shall adopt them and save the country!"

The ministers of Kalinga took leaves of gold and travelled to Indraprastha. They met King Dhananjaya. "O virtuous King! We come from Kalinga where people are dying of terrible famine. You're the very Incarnation of Virtue! You rule your people absolutely righteously, so that your people live happily, free from all calamities. Would you be kind enough to write down on these leaves of gold the rules of righteous administration? We shall take them back to our lord, who will put them into practice and save our country."

The ministers of Kalinga placed the leaves of gold before King Dhananjaya. But King Dhananjaya folded his hands and said, "Pardon me, wise ministers. I'm not competent to write down the rules of righteousness. For, once I myself had transgressed the path of virtue. I shall tell you how. The Kartik festival is celebrated in our land every third year. On that day the king has to perform Yajna on the bund of a tank. At the end of it, he should shoot four arrows in four directions. On a particular occasion I shot the arrows but only three of them were recovered, the fourth having fallen into a tank. It fell with such force that many fishes and frogs died. Thus I deviated

A JATAKA TALE

from the path of virtue. If my country is free from calamities it must be because of the virtue of someone else in the court. Kindly find out who it was."

The ministers of Kalinga were surprised to hear this. They went to Maya Devi, the king's mother, and told her what the king said.

Then they asked her if she would oblige them by writing down the rules of righteousness on the leaves of gold.

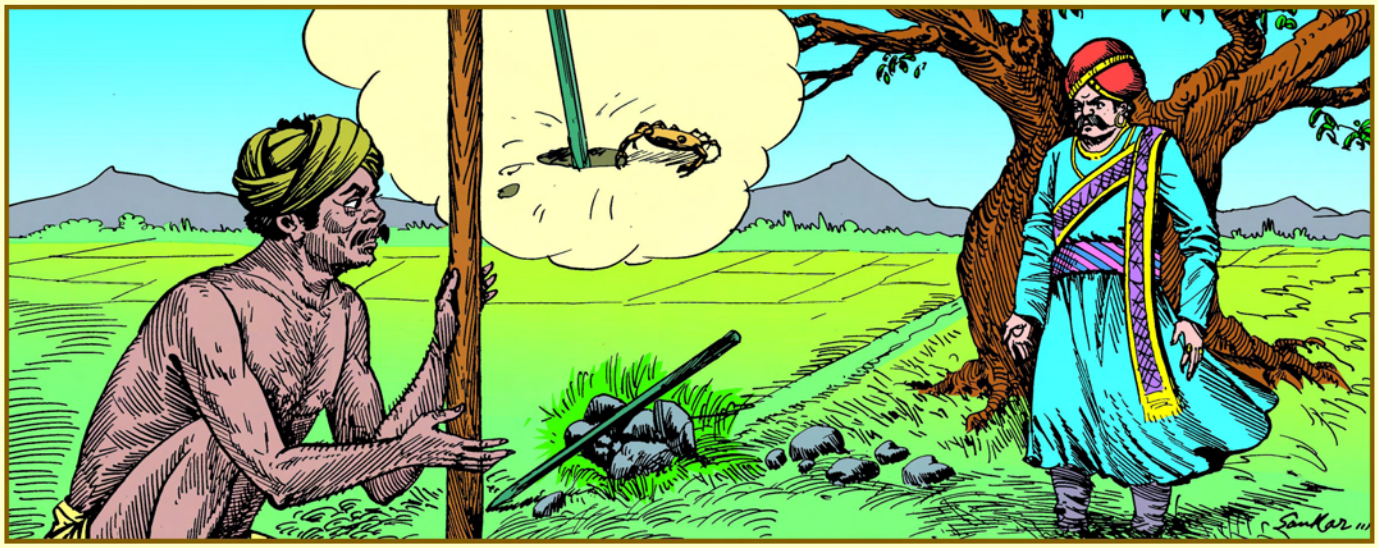
"Ah, my friends!" the venerable lady replied. "I, too, have strayed from the path of virtue once. When my elder son gave me a gold necklace, I thought since my elder daughter-in-law was rich, I should give it to the younger one. But after doing so, I was beset with remorse for having drawn a distinction between my two daughters-in-law. How am I competent to write down the rules of righteousness? Please find someone else."

Then the ministers approached the king's brother, Nanda. But he, too, confessed that he had transgressed the path of virtue. "I take a ride to the palace every evening in my chariot. At times I stay back for the night. If I leave my whip in the chariot, my charioteer knows that I shall return, and he waits for me. If I take the whip with me, the charioteer drives away and comes for me only the next morning. Well, one evening I left my whip in the chariot, intending to return soon. But suddenly it began to rain, and my brother, the king, detained me in the palace. All through the night my charioteer waited for me, getting soaked in the rain. It was unforgivable on my part to have put him to that discomfort."

The ministers then went to the king's *purohit* hoping to find in him the required merits to fill the leaves of gold. But he, too, had to confess to a breach of virtue. He said, "One day I was going to court when I saw a chariot with gold fittings. Seeing it, I had an urge to request the king to make a gift of that chariot to me. The moment the king saw me he told me that the chariot was a gift for me. I was so ashamed of my cupidity that I had to decline the gift. So, don't take me as an embodiment of virtue, which I am not."

As a last resort the ministers of Kalinga went to the minister of Dhananjaya. But he, too, had a confession. "One day," he said, "I went to measure a peasant's land. At the exact spot where the marking peg was to be driven into the ground, I found a small hole. If I avoided the hole and drove the peg to a side, either the peasant or his neighbour would lose a bit of land. So, in the name of accurate justice, I ordered the peg to be knocked into the hole. As this was being done, a small crab came out of the hole and got crushed. Tell me, how am I entitled to write down the rules of righteousness?"

The baffled ministers of Kalinga were at last struck with a bright idea. They wrote down on the gold leaves all the stories they had heard, and took them to their king. King Kalinga read them and realised that the best virtue is the awareness of righteousness. With self-criticism as his motto, he ruled his country, and the people were freed from all calamities and lived happily.



A JUST VERDICT

"Is our legal system working well?" Emperor Akbar asked the courtiers.

"Yes, Shahenshah. Our judges are very efficient. They are honest and upright. They know the law, inside out. They dispose off cases quickly. Most cases are decided at the first hearing itself," said an old courtier.

"Our laws are fair and just. All are equal in the eyes of law," another courtier cooed.

Other courtiers, too, sang the same tune. Birbal, however, said nothing. He remained silent while others expressed their views.

The Emperor noticed his silence. Why was Birbal so quiet? Perhaps he did not agree with the rest of the courtiers. Perhaps he did not rate the laws of the land as truly efficient. The Emperor frowned; a dozen lines formed on his forehead. Birbal noticed it. So did the rest of the courtiers. Yet Birbal did not say a word.



"Birbal!" the Emperor fixed his eyes on Birbal and said in a high-pitched voice, "I fear you don't have a high opinion of the laws of this land and the way our legal system works."

"Shahenshah!" Birbal turned to the Emperor with a smile.

"Am I right in stating that you hold our legal system in contempt?" the Emperor sounded furious.

"No, Sire. How could I ever hold that view? But, good laws and good judges alone do not necessarily ensure justice," Birbal stopped as he saw a guard walking in.

"Shahenshah," the guard saluted in the traditional way. He bent low enough for his outstretched hand to touch the ground. Then he stood up and offered a dozen *salaams*.

"Yes."

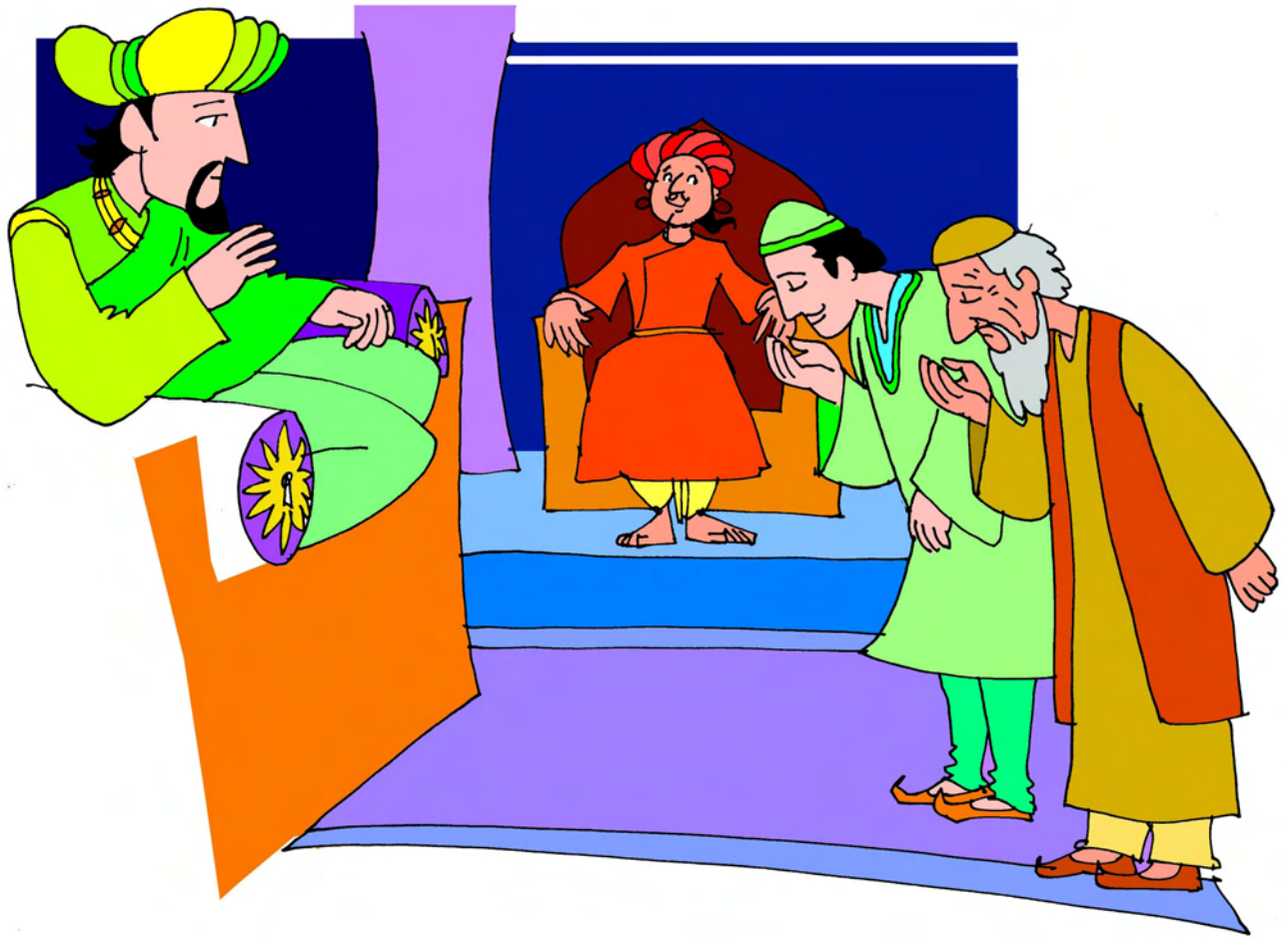
"An old man, who says he is a teacher of law, is waiting for an audience. He has brought along a young man who is the old man's student. He says his student has been quoting the law to deny him his fee. He wants to present his case before the royal Court and seek justice," the guard explained.

"Bring them in," the Emperor directed the guard. The guard bowed, salaamed and moved out.

"A teacher of law says he has been cheated by his student. A student whom he has taught law! That makes the situation very interesting," Birbal noted.

"What makes it interesting?" a courtier asked.

"The student had learned law from the teacher. The student, I presume, is now pitting his newfound knowledge against his teacher. He must be a clever student. He must



have found some rule in the law book that justifies his action. He must have found a loophole in the law or in the terms set by him to his teacher. That's why he is confident enough to come with his teacher to the royal Court," Birbal guessed.

The Emperor heard the verbal exchange. He leaned back and sighed. Was it possible that the law had loopholes? If so, they must be plugged. The Emperor decided to take it up with the courtiers later.

The guard walked in, leading the two men. One of them was quite old. His hair was totally grey. His face had wrinkles all over. Yet his eyes were bright. They reflected immense maturity. The young man seemed confident. Rather over-confident, thought Birbal.

The two men bowed low, paid homage to the Emperor, and stood up.

"Who are you?" the Emperor asked the old man.

"Shahenshah, I'm Vinod Kumar. I teach law to young men. I collect a fee from every student. That's how I make a living," the old man was brief, yet he managed to say all that the Emperor needed to know.

"You've a complaint to make?"

"Yes, *Alampana*! I taught law to this young man Pramod Behari. He came to me and requested me to teach him law. I quoted my fee. I said I take three *mohars* every month. The course, I added, extends to a year. He said he had no money to pay. He claimed he belonged to a very poor family. I felt pity for him. I said he could pay me the entire fee of 36 mohars as soon he won his first case. He agreed. I taught him law. He's very bright, very intelligent. So, he learnt quickly. Soon he gained insight into the finer points of law. I felt proud of him. I sensed he would be a good lawyer. I waited for him to complete his studies and start practising. Then, when he won his first case, I thought, I would get my fees," the old man paused.

"Now he refuses to pay?" the Emperor leaned forward.

"No, Shahenshah. He doesn't refuse to pay. He says he'll pay me when he wins his first case. But I'm afraid that will never happen," the old man sounded sad.

"But why?" The case was getting more curious.



"Because he now refuses to practise law. Unless he practises law, he won't win a case. Unless he wins a case, I won't get my fees!" the old man groaned.

"Aha," the Emperor now turned to the young man. "Answer my questions."

"Yes, Shahenshah," the young man bowed.

"Did he teach you law?"

"Yes, Shahenshah."

"You never paid him fees while you were a student?"

"No, Shahenshah. I was born in a very poor family. I could not pay him the fees."

"Did you promise to pay him his dues once you won your first case?"

"Yes, Shahenshah."

"You have completed the course of study?"

"Yes, Shahenshah."

"So you can now practise law?"

"Yes, Shahenshah."

"But you won't practise law?"

"Shahenshah! Recently a grand uncle died. He was very rich. He had vast stretches of land . . . farms and orchards. He had no children. I have inherited his wealth. Now I'm rich. I don't need to practise law. I plan to go back to the land. I shall live the life of a rich farmer," the young man replied.

"The teacher doesn't get paid till you win your first case," the Emperor repeated the fact.

"That was the condition, Shahenshah," the student said.

"Is that true?" the Emperor turned to the old man.

"Yes, Shahenshah," the old man replied.

"So, where is the cause for action? How can we help you?" the Emperor looked puzzled.

"Shahenshah," the young man waited.

"Go on," the Emperor asked him to proceed.

"If, some day, I practise law and win, I shall pay my teacher. I respect him. He is very good at teaching law. Thanks to him, I know all aspects of law. I know how to interpret the law. I know how to draft contracts. In brief, I know how law works," the young man bragged.

"The wily rogue!" Birbal hissed under his breath.

The Emperor was at his wit's end. He felt sympathy for the old man. But it was not sympathy that the old man wanted. He wanted his fees. There was no way the Emperor could get him the money

He hoped that one of the courtiers might show him the way. So, he turned to them for guidance. "What have you to say?" he asked them

"The old man will have to wait, Shahenshah. He has a right to claim payment only when the young man wins his first case," said the oldest of the courtiers.

"That's the legal position," said all the courtiers except Birbal.

"Birbal! What have you to say?" the Emperor looked at Birbal.

"Shahenshah, the young man is right. He doesn't have to pay till he wins his first case," Birbal smiled at the young man.

The young man grinned. The old man's face fell. He had come with hopes of getting his dues. Those hopes now lay in ruin. He cursed his fate.

"Heard it, O noble Sire? I am sorry. I agree you deserve your fee. But you're bound by the contract. You

NUTRINE QUIZ-4

1. Who is the first Indian to win an Oscar?
   a. Satyajit Ray b. Bhanu Athaiya
   c. Shekhar Kapoor d. M. N. Shyamlan

2. Which city is known as the 'Silicon Valley' of India?
   a. Chennai b. Kolkata
   c. Mumbai d. Bangalore

(Answer on page 47)

nutrine India's largest selling sweets and toffees.

don't get paid till the young man wins his first case. Till then you've to wait," the Emperor waved his hand, putting an end to the hearing.

"Thank you, Shahenshah! I knew that the law was on my side. I also knew you're always fair in judging cases," the young man looked at the old man with a sneer.

The old man was almost in tears. He knew he had been worsted. And there was nothing that he could do. He had entered into an agreement. He could get the fee only when the student won his first case. It now seemed he would never fight his first case. So, the old man would never get his fees.

He bowed to the Emperor. So did the young man. Then they started moving out.

"Poor old man!" said the Emperor as he watched the two retreating.

"One minute!" Birbal's voice rang through the court.

The courtiers sat up. So did the Emperor. He felt a little happy. He guessed Birbal had something in his mind. He wished Birbal found a way to get the old man his fee.

The young man moved in quickly. The old man dragged his feet.

Birbal waited till both came close to where he was sitting.

"My dear young friend," Birbal smiled at the young man.

"Yes, O great Birbal!" the young man bowed.

"You promised to pay your teacher his fee on winning your first case."

"I did. I shall not go back on my promise," the young man replied.

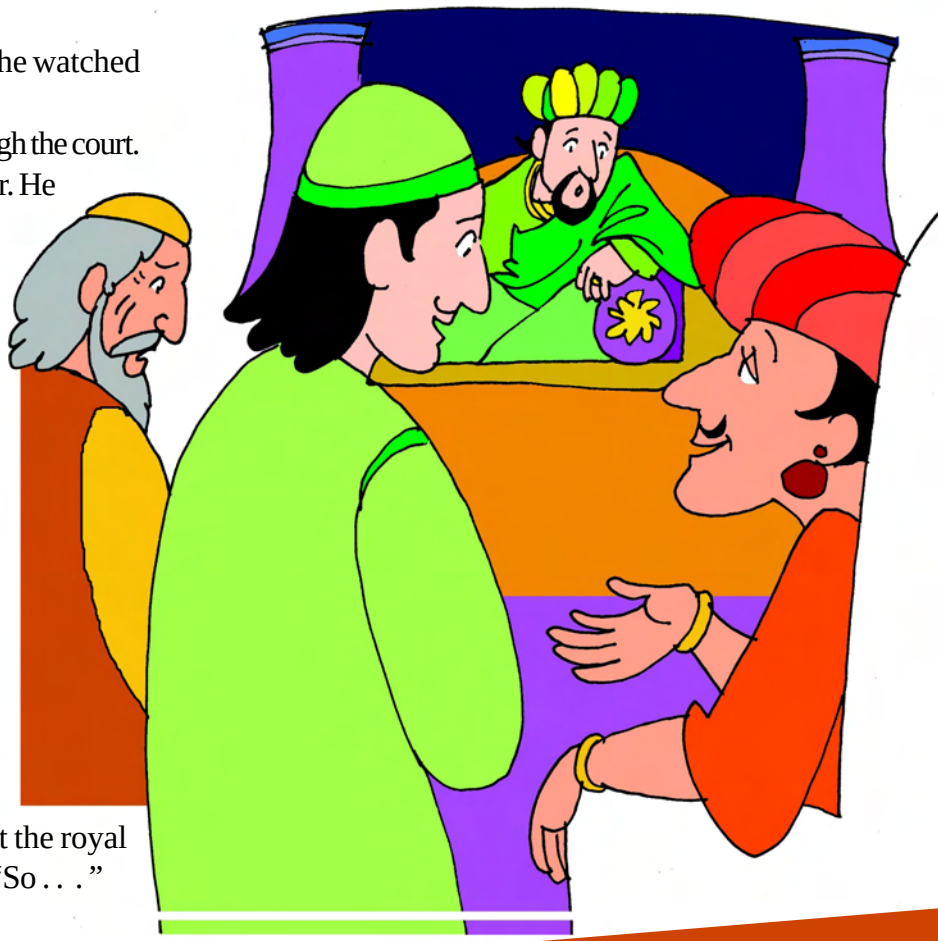
"Well, you have just won your case at the royal Court. Won your first case," he repeated. "So . . . "

The young man was taken aback. He knew he was caught on the wrong foot. He would have to pay the fee to his teacher now that he had won the case. The old man, too, realized that. He thanked the Emperor and Birbal for securing him justice.

The young man paid the fee. The old man left, happy that he had got his due. The young man trailed behind him, sad that he had lost money by winning his first case. That was one victory he didn't relish. Soon they were out of the Court.

"Well done, Birbal," the Emperor held Birbal in a warm hug.

-R.K.Murthi



UNDER A CURSE



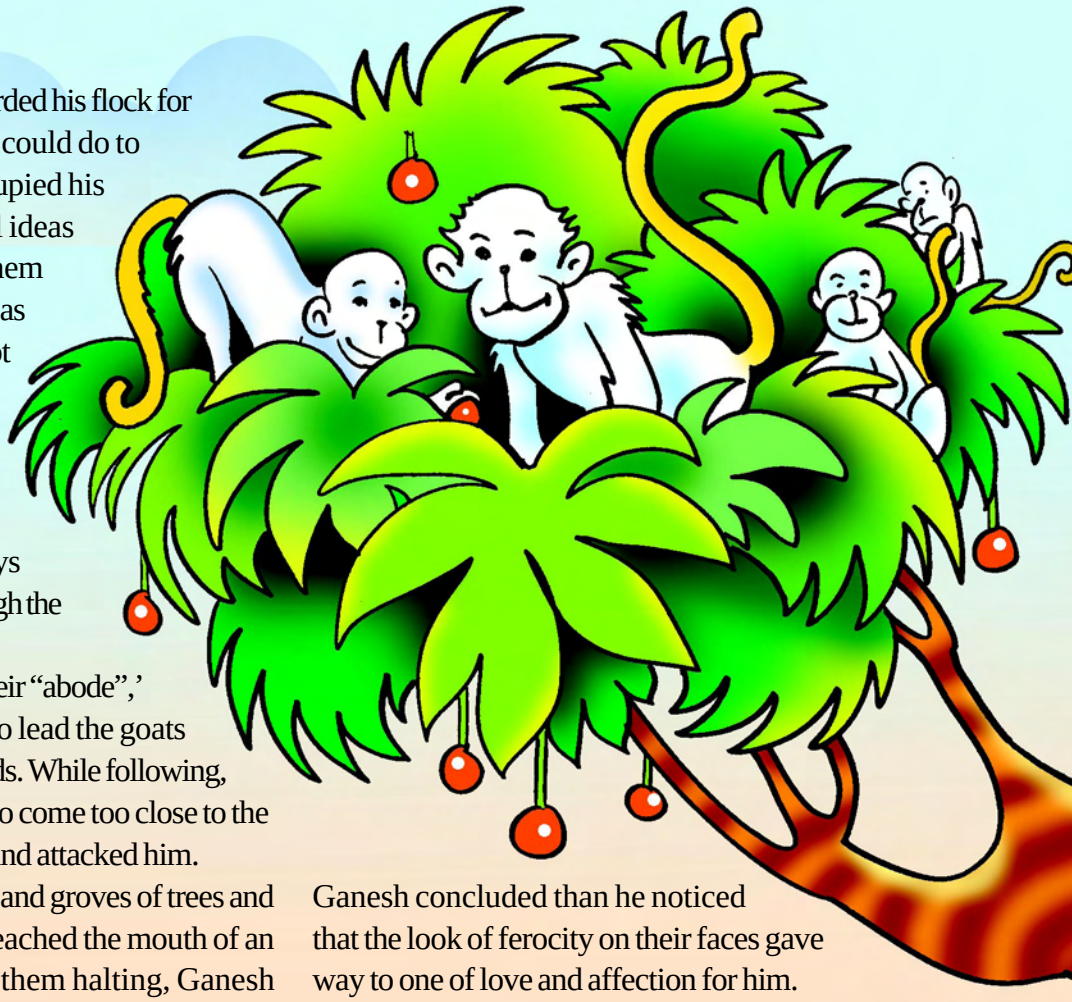
As the sun sank behind the wooded hills, Ganesh rose from beneath the great banyan tree where he sat watching his goats grazing on the grass around. With him was Gheru, his best pal who accompanied him on his daily exercise of grazing the goats. Dusting the seat of his pyjamas and fastening his towel round his waist, Ganesh began gathering his goats. It was time to return home. As he herded his flock homeward, his eyes caught sight of the five monkeys, frolicking in a grove of mango trees some distance away towards the hills. After romping playfully on the trees for a while, the monkeys moved away towards the hills. Ganesh now made for home along with Gheru and his flock of goats.

'Where did they come from?' Ganesh wondered. No one in the village knew exactly from where the monkeys had come. They did not come there regularly. Some times for days there would be no sign of them; then, all of a sudden, they appeared, making havoc with the crops and villagers' household things and charging at those who tried to stop their orgy. On being chased by the villagers, they simply vanished from sight.

With their golden tail and the rest of the body as white as snow, the monkeys seemed denizens of another world. Never had such monkeys been seen in the village until one day, not long ago, they suddenly appeared from nowhere. Although the villagers considered themselves fortunate to see such unusually looking monkeys, it pained them immensely when they wrought havoc on the crops whenever they descended on their village. They had become so much of a pest that one day the village chief ordered his men to do away with them by offering them food spiked with poison.

'How can the chief be so cruel and inhuman?' Ganesh felt deeply stirred when the news broke. Like many others, he, too, was not at all happy with the monkeys for what they did every time they appeared. But being very kind hearted, he could never even imagine such an inhuman punishment meted out to them for their acts.

MAHE



Next morning, as Ganesh herded his flock for grazing, he considered what he could do to save their lives. The matter occupied his mind the whole day and several ideas came to his mind, but none of them seemed practical. In the evening, as the sun began setting, Ganesh got up from beneath the banyan tree where, as usual, he sat tending his goats grazing around. As he herded his flock homeward, he again caught sight of the monkeys romping their way hillwards through the mango orchard.

'Today I'll surely discover their "abode",' he resolved and, asking Gheru to lead the goats back home, he dashed off hillwards. While following, Ganesh was careful enough not to come too close to the monkeys, lest they noticed him and attacked him.

Traversing the wooded hills and groves of trees and orchards, the monkeys finally reached the mouth of an old cavern, and halted. Seeing them halting, Ganesh quickly hid behind a grassy mound nearby and curiously waited for their next move. Suddenly, to his utter astonishment, they started metamorphosing into humans. With mouth wide agape as he watched the mystery unfolding before his eyes, a terrible sneeze escaped his mouth and nostrils, which made the monkeys–now turned into "gundharvas" (celestial beings)–aware of the presence, somewhere nearby, of a human. Together, they turned their heads towards the sound; and, in no time at all, Ganesh found himself surrounded by them.

'Who are you, boy? Where have you come from? What on earth are you doing here?' bellowed one of them.

'Answer the questions truthfully, or else!' growled another, eyes glaring.

Trembling with fear, Ganesh stood speechless. He no option but to respond. With all the courage he could muster, he told them all that they wanted to know from him. He also told them about the village chief having ordered his men to kill them and about his intention to do something to help them save their lives. No sooner had Ganesh concluded than he noticed that the look of ferocity on their faces gave way to one of love and affection for him.

'Tell us, what should we do to save our lives?' asked one of them, flinging an affectionate arm around Ganesh's shoulders. After some careful thought, Ganesh replied, 'Ensure that none of you harms anyone or damages anything in the village whenever you go there.'

'That we can't ensure, for once we turn monkeys, we lose control over our behaviour,' they all said in one voice.

'Then, ensure you do not go there ever again.'

'Yes, that we can do,' they chorused.

'By the way, how come you all change into humans? What's behind all this?' asked Ganesh.

'Actually,' one of them began, 'we are all gundharvas, having our abode in a celestial region. We come down to earth once in a while to feast our eyes on nature's beauty. Once we happened to alight in a wooded area towards noon. We were very thirsty as well as hungry, so we started looking for a place where we could get some water and something to eat. While searching, we came across a hermitage. The hermit was not present, nor was anyone



else around there. We were so thirsty and hungry that we could not wait for the hermit to return. We entered the hut, and found both water and eatables.

'Having satiated ourselves, we broke into revelry. In the process, we caused considerable damage to the hermitage, his garden, and even his hut. While we were making merry, the hermit returned. He erupted into fury, and without asking us anything, he administered this curse: "Like monkeys, you Gundharvas have played havoc with my place, so all of you will change into monkeys at the break of dawn tomorrow. You'll remain monkeys till dusk; afterwards you'll change back into Gundharvas."

'The hermit with his superhuman powers had instantly recognized us as celestial beings. 'We all pleaded with him to show mercy on us. Our pleadings melted his heart. He said he didn't have the power to revoke the curse. He asked us to give a pledge that we would never do anything wrong again in our lives. We gave the promise whereupon he threw his hands skywards, shut his eyes and murmured something, and then said: "Now you're partly free form the curse. Its influence will last for only one year, after which you'd be able to return to your own world and lead your lives as before."

'Exactly as the hermit had told us, next day at dawn, we turned monkeys. Since then, after wandering here and there, we return to the cavern at dusk when we regain our original form. When night falls we go inside the cavern. This is how we have been living our lives ever since.'

'How many days are still left for the curse to cease to have its effect?'

'Three months.'

'So, don't come to my village till then, if you wish to stay alive,' said Ganesh.

'Yes, we won't,' they all promised in one voice.

'You've done us a great favour by warning us, for which we owe you a great debt of gratitude. Come here, at dusk, at the end of three months when we'll be free from the curse. You'll find us awaiting you,' said one of them. 'Why do you want me to come here?' asked Ganesh, curiously.

'That I'll tell you only then. Don't forget to turn up. You should better be returning home now. Don't mention this at all to any one in your village.' The monkeys were not seen in the village anymore. The villagers did notice that they had suddenly stopped coming to the village.

Ganesh kept absolutely silent about the whole incident. Days rolled by and the time came when Ganesh was to show up at the cavern. He found the monkeys awaiting him. 'It's time we returned the favour you did us,' said one of the Gundharvas, greeting him with a warm smile on his face. 'We wish to present you with something in gratitude for your help. Now don't refuse to accept it.' He held in his hand an oval stone, a brilliant blue, transparent and radiant. 'This is no ordinary stone. It's endowed with magical powers; it'll grant you whatever you will wish for. But the moment it'll land in anyone else's hands, it'll lose its power and turn into an ordinary stone,' he said, handing the stone to Ganesh.

Needless to add, the magic stone changed the lives of Ganesh and his family, of course for the better. The villagers never came to know what happened to the monkeys, or for that matter, why all of a sudden they stopped going there. ***- Sanjay Kumar Srivastava***

KALEIDOSCOPE



NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

Another New Year has come. We all will enjoy New Year by going to our relative's house. We will also go for shopping and buy some articles to be given to the tsunami victims. The trauma of tsunami still haunts us. From this year, I shall follow some good habits and leave all bad habits which I was having in the previous year. I will not give any trouble to my mother. I will study my daily lessons.

- P. Aishwarya V.

GOOD-BYE TO BAD HABITS

This New Year I'll leave all bad habits and cultivate more of good habits. I'll celebrate New Year by distributing sweets to others. From New Year, I will be a good boy. I will help poor people. At present I have many bad habits; I will leave them all and start a good new year.

- S. Ganesh Raja



MY NEW YEAR



We share sweets with our friends, relatives, and neighbours on New Year day. This year, I'm going to do this, as well as I'll take some good things in and take out all bad things in me. I shall not only enjoy and play, but study. We pray to God that this new year should be happy and prosperous for India and the whole world.

- N.M. Abhishek

(Students of Akshara Vidya Ashram, Cuddalore)

MY FRIEND



When I see the twinkling star,
When I see the charming moon,
I can always remember
Your lovely face, my friend.

When I hear the songs of the bird,
The beauty of the rising morning,
I can feel that you'll be there
By my side always.

Even if we are far from each other,
We will always be there at
The bottom of our hearts
B'coz the friendship that we share is eternal.

Priyanka Maisnam (13) Manipur

I WANT TO BE MYSELF



Everyone wants me to be like them
And forget my own self
They think I am just a lifeless puppet
Sitting on their shelf.

Why can't I be myself?
Why can't they allow me to live my very own life?
Everyone sees themselves in me
And ignore my joys and sorrows.

They know that everybody is different
With their own wants and needs
They know that plants will not grow their way
Even if they are the ones to sow the seeds.

I wish they would know
What I think, feel and do
For, then they'll let me be me
And you yourself be you.

- Aakriti Pasricha (12), Delhi



Judge : You were brought here nine months ago on charges of stealing a blanket. You should be ashamed of committing the same crime again!

Thief : How long can an old blanket be used, your honour?

❖ ❖ ❖



Teacher : What would you get if you add 20,567 to 23, then multiply it by 6 and divide by 20?

Student : The wrong answer.

- Rajiv I.P. (14), Gadag



Teacher : Why are you late?

Rakesh : As it had rained yesterday, the road was slippery. When I took one step forward, I slipped two steps backward.

Teacher : Tomorrow onwards, you walk in the opposite direction.

❖ ❖ ❖



Boss (to new office boy) : The cashier told me that you lost the key to the cupboard.

Boy : Yes, sir, I lost one of the two keys.

Boss : Then where is the other key?

Boy : I kept it inside before locking it.

- Nischol M. (14), Alike



Doctor : Do you really think your memory is improving?

Patient : Not exactly, doctor, but I've progressed far that I can frequently remember that I've forgotten something.

❖ ❖ ❖



Newly wed bride : What will I get if I cook for you a dinner like that every day this year?

Husband : My life insurance.

H.D. Prajwala (13), Hassan

Aditya : My dog is great at Mathematics.

Karthik : Really?

Aditya : Ask him how much is two minus two?

Karthik : But two minus two is nothing!



Aditya : Yes, he'll answer nothing!

❖ ❖ ❖

Teacher : If there were ten cats in a boat, and if one jumped out, how many would be left?

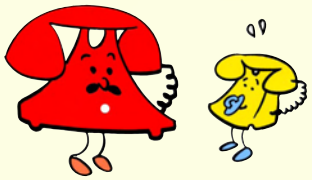


Karan : None, because they were all copycats!

- Ashutosh K. Sunthe (13) Belgaum

RIDDLES

1. What did Father telephone say to Baby telephone?





2. What is common between a lazy worker and a gun?

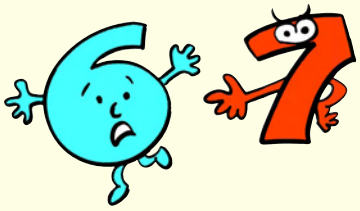
S. Akash (12), Thrissur



3. What is the snake's favourite subject?

4. What is the tornadoe's favourite dance?

Madhuvratha V.J. (12), Mumbai



5. Why is six afraid of seven?

6. What is the centre of gravity?

Ashutosh K. Sunthe (13), Belgaum

7. Who built the first underground tunnel?

8. What weighs almost nothing, but you can't hold it for long?

Rajiv I.P. (14), Gadag

9. One head with three hands. What am I?

M.R. Ganesh Kumar (12), Thiruninravur

10. What tree comes in two's?



V. Thilak Raj Kumar (13), Salem

11. What can run, but never walks; has a mouth, but never talks; has a head, but never nods; has a bed, but never sleeps?

B. Ragavi (12), Avadi

PUZZLES

PICK A NUMBER

There are five rows A,B,C,D and E. Choose only one number from each row to add up to 99.

A	B	C	D	E
24	18	5	15	21
4	12	10	3	19
14	22	17	8	16
25	9	2	23	11
1	7	13	20	6

- P. Chandramohan Hegde (15) Mangalore

WHAT'S HER AGE?

A popular movie actor was asked how old she is. She replied. "I'm 35, but that is not counting Saturdays and Sundays." How old is she?

A QUARTER QUIZ

Arrange the numbers 1 to 9 in such a way to form a single fraction equivalent to one-fourth.

- L. Malathi Dange (14), Mumbai

ANSWERS TO PICK A NUMBER:

25+18+17+20+19=99

ANSWERS TO WHAT'S HER AGE?:

49 years

ANSWERS TO A QUARTER QUIZ:

$\frac{3942}{15768} = \frac{1}{4}$

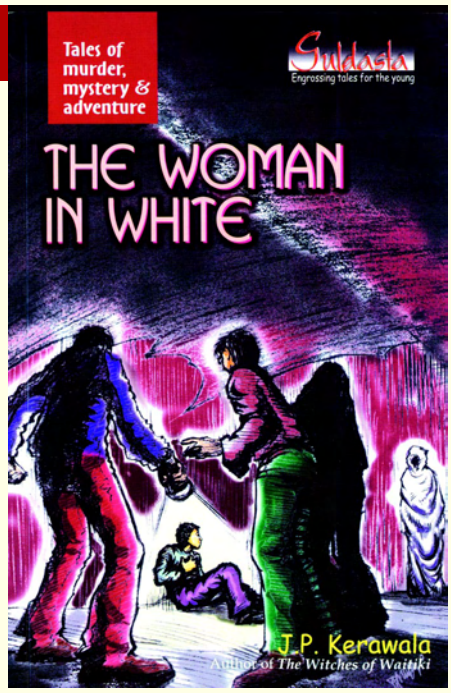
ANSWERS TO RIDDLES:

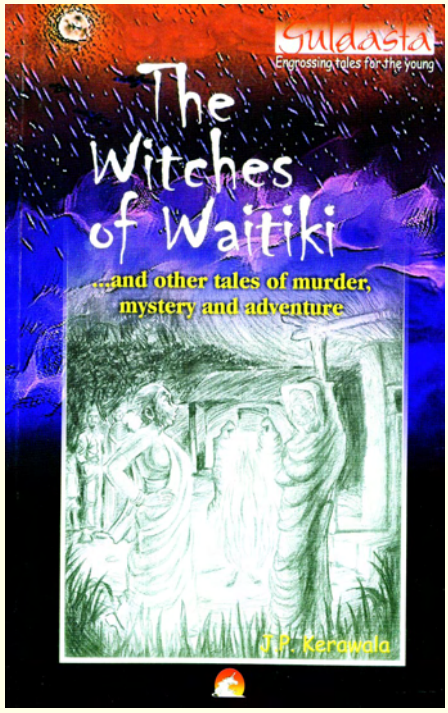
1. You're too young to be engaged! 2. Both are fired, 3. Hiss-story, 4. The twist, 5. Seven ate (eight) nine! 6. Letter "V", 7. Earthworms, 8. Your breath, 9. Clock, 10. Pear (pair) tree, 11. River.

BOOK REVIEW

GRIPPING PLOTS

***The Woman in White* and *The Witches of Waitiki*, both by J.P.Kerawala, UNICORN Books, New Delhi**





Ever heard of a dog that snooped around and cracked mysteries? Or a boy who floundered into the 35th century and found himself in the thick of an armed revolution? Or the curious and intelligent girl forever stumbling into adventure? Or the mystery of the three ghostly women who had an entire village terrified? Ah, if that made your antennae stretch out in curiosity, then these two books are for you. '*The Woman in White*' and '*The Witches of Waitiki*' are collections of not-too-short stories for the young.

These books of murder, mystery and adventure feature lively and engaging young heroes and heroines, energetically charging out in search of clues and chasing suspected goons. Murder, kidnap, robbery, attempted murder – you name it, and it is there.

While in one story, the Kohinoor diamond that is brought to Pune for a display disappears from its heavily-guarded enclosure in the museum, in another, a village boy suspected of possessing drugs runs away from the police and falls into an even greater intrigue. And what do you think happens when a car breaks down in the dead of the night leaving a gullible family all at sea in the middle of wilderness?

And in the only house they come across, they see three women in white, whose ghostly bony white frame and fleshless smile make their stomachs churn – and yours, too!

The most inimitable stories are the reminiscences of the dog detective Cocky, his street dog friend Raja, and his girl friend Trixie. And did you think dogs could not think, or put two and two together? Well, think again. These dogs would put a human being to shame!

Gripping, racy plots, smooth dialogue, engaging humour, lively characters – these books have it all. Just the right things to curl up with on a cold winter afternoon!

- Sumathi Sudhakar

DID YOU KNOW?



In the Kurukshetra war, the flag on Yudhishthira's chariot had a pair of *mridangas;* Bhima's chariot carried a *simha-dhwaja,* while Arjuna's flag was a *kapi* (monkey) *dhwaja*.

nutrine India's largest selling sweets and toffees.

THE ARABIAN NIGHTS



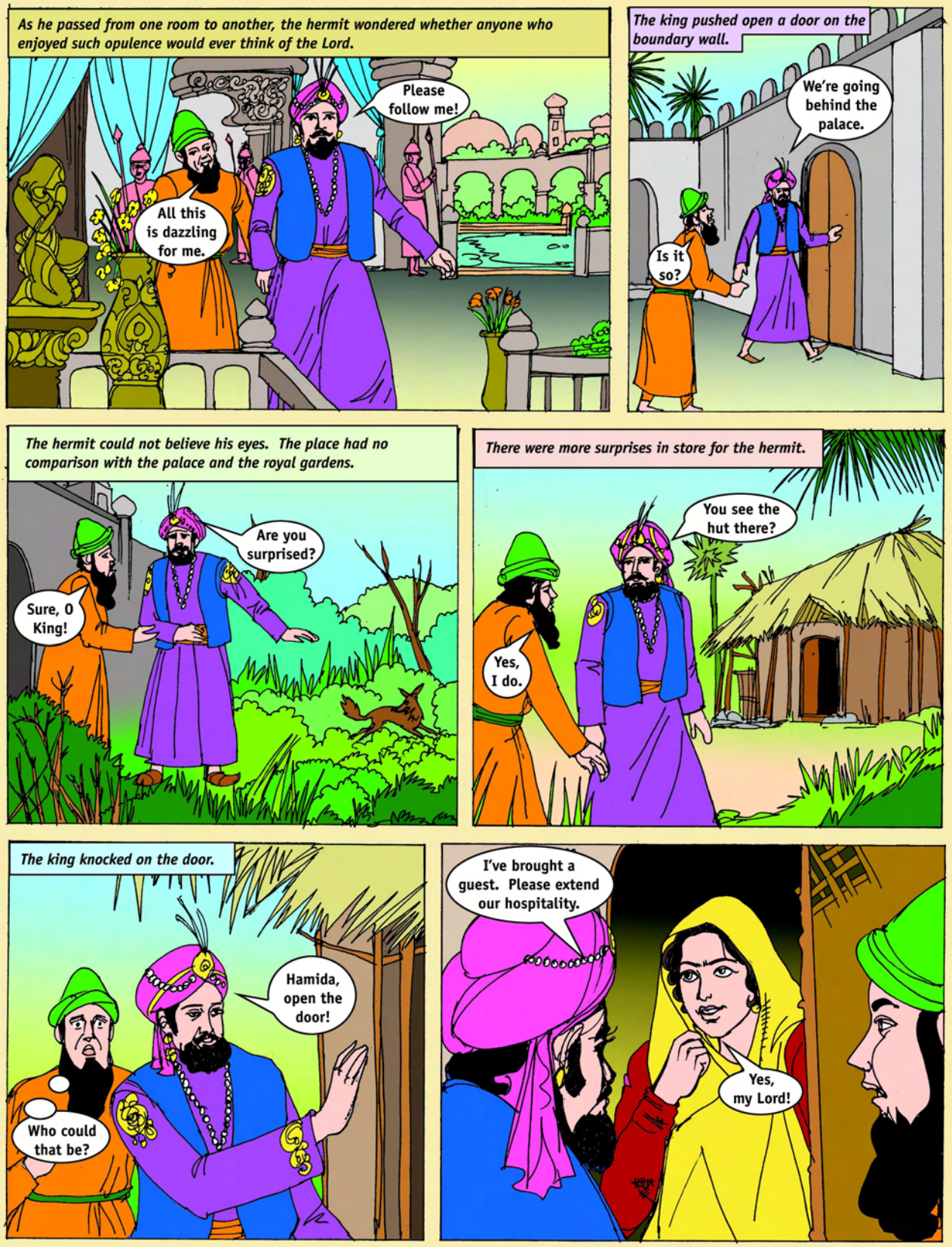
THE MASTER OF THE CLOUDS



THE ARABIAN NIGHTS



THE MASTER OF THE CLOUDS



THE ARABIAN NIGHTS



THE MASTER OF THE CLOUDS



A FRAUDULENT SAINT

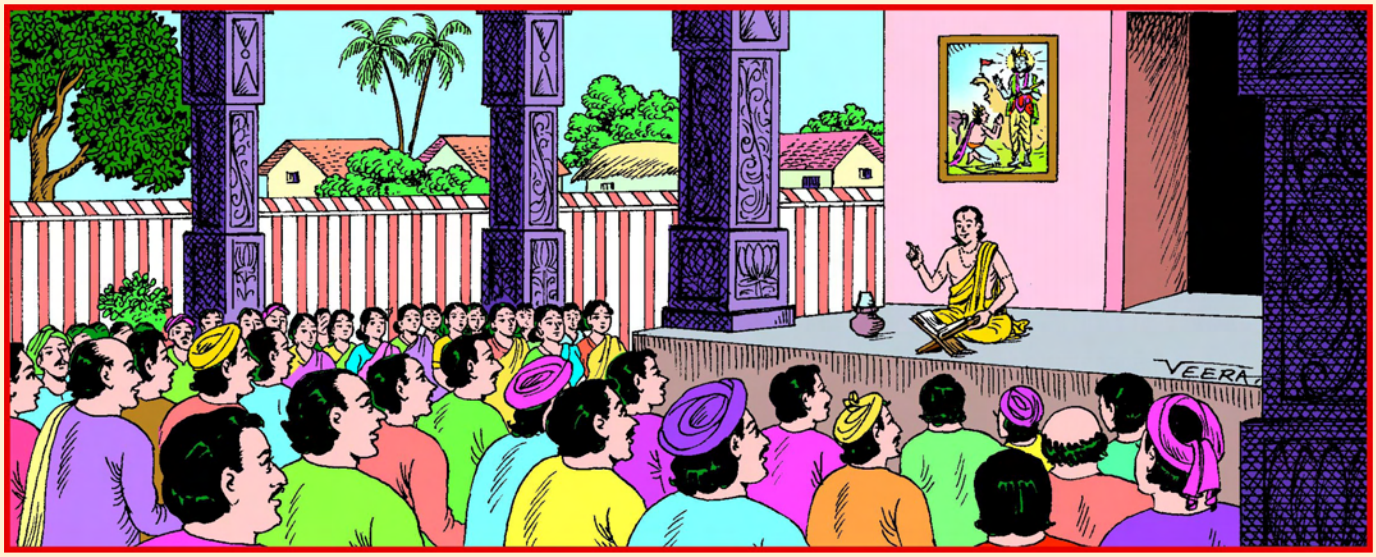
In the village of Vishnupur, yogi Krishnananda held discourses on the *Bhagawad Gita* for a fortnight. The villagers assembled in large numbers to listen to him. The landlord Ram Singh made it a point to attend the discourse every day along with his friend Arun Verma. He was very much impressed with the discourse which left an everlasting impression in his mind. On the concluding day, the yogi finished his speech by saying, "Salvation should be the ultimate goal of every human being. To attain it, one should be guided by a spiritual preceptor over a long period. I request all of you to search for a guru who would lead you to the path of salvation."

The concluding remark made such a profound influence on Ram Singh that from that day, he started searching for the ideal guru. His long search ultimately yielded result. He came to know of a great saint, Swami Nithyananda, living in an ashram at the foothills of the Himalayas, having thousands of followers in the pursuit of salvation. At once, he decided to take refuge at the holy feet of Nithyananda.

When he announced his decision to his wife Sita, she was shocked. "Please, don't take such a hasty decision!" she pleaded. "Our sons are still growing. We've not really settled down in our life and your responsibilities towards the family are not yet over. At this stage, you can't leave us and go and live in an ashram."

But Ram Singh was adamant. He had already resolved to follow the path leading to his salvation; his wife's wailings fell on his deaf ears. He called his friend Arun Verma and said, "Friend! I've decided to go to Nithyananda's ashram and pass my remaining days there. I entrust the responsibility of my family and my property to you."

One fine morning, he bade good-bye to his family and friends and set out towards the Himalayas. After a long journey, when he reached the ashram, he was a bit surprised. It was not a simple one as he had imagined. It was a majestic building with multiple storeys full of pomp and luxury. Many devotees were waiting in a long queue for his *darshan*. His disciples were numerous. One of them interviewed Ram Singh since he was a newcomer. Ram Singh was intrigued at the way the disciple asked him questions probing into the details of his property.



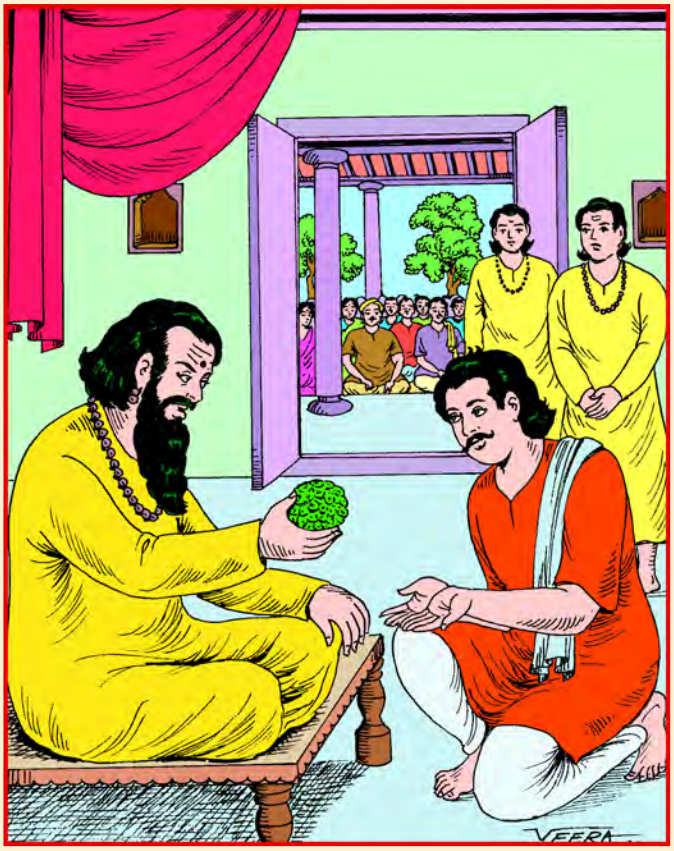
When it was found that Ram Singh was a wealthy man, he was ushered into the presence of the saint immediately. Ram Singh fell at his feet and paid obeisance to him. "Long live, my child!" blessed the saint. "Your name must be the same as 'Dasarathaputhra'! Though you're a rich landlord, I can see that you don't have peace of mind. You want to attain salvation. Am I right?"

Ram Singh was wonderstruck. He wondered how the saint could know so much about him. What he did not know was that the saint had already been briefed by the disciple who interviewed him. He said with folded hands, "You're right, Swamiji! I want salvation!"

"Be with me forever to attain salvation!" said the saint. Then, he waved his hand in the air and got a fruit. "Take this *prasad*!" said he and gave it to him. Then, Ram Singh was taken to a room for his stay. Contrary to what he expected, was luxuriously furnished and he was entertained with excellent food. From that day onwards, he spent his time cheerfully in the ashram, participating in bhajans and listening to discourses.

One day, he was ushered into the presence of the saint. "My child! Please listen to me!" said the saint. "You came alone into this world and you will go back alone into the heavens. Your property will not follow you to the heavens. In fact, your property is the stumbling block on your way to salvation. Get rid of it. Give your entire property in charity to the ashram. Only, then can you think of attaining salvation."

'Never a truer word has been said!' thought Ram Singh. Immediately, he wrote letters to his wife and Arun Verma. He advised them to keep the house and one acre of land for the family. They should find a prospective buyer to sell the rest of the lands. He would come personally to sign the documents, sell them, collect the money and return. He wished to donate the proceeds to the ashram.



His wife Sita had the shock of her life on reading the letter. She became hysterical with grief and anxiety. Arun Verma consoled her and suggested a plan to restrain her husband from going ahead. Verma took the village chief also into confidence.

After a few days, Ram Singh received a letter from Sita. He boiled with anger on reading the contents. It said his friend, in his absence, had cleverly transferred the documents in his name and he was now trying to sell the property.

Immediately, he rushed to his village and confronted Arun Verma. "What a cheat you are! I had entrusted my property to you in good faith and you have stabbed me in the back. I won't leave you! Let's go to the village chief to settle the issue!"

Both went to the chief. Ram Singh accused his friend of treachery and requested that his property be restored to him. The chief said, "Let me check everything in detail. Before I check, I



DID YOU KNOW?

Whales produce the loudest sound emitted by any living source. Some are even louder than the sound of a jet plane.

want to know certain things from you. I learnt that you're going to donate the sale proceeds to saint Nithyananda's ashram. Is it true?"

"Yes, sir! Swamiji has told me that I could attain salvation only on renouncing my life totally."

"It means that you're prepared to renounce your wife, sons, relatives, friends and all other worldly possessions for the sake of your salvation. Am I right?"

"Yes. You are!"

"Ram Singh! If you're going to renounce everything, how does it matter whether your lands are in your possession or in your friend's possession?"

"What will then my wife and sons do for their future?"

"Why should you worry about them when you're going to renounce everything? It shows you're not yet mentally prepared to renounce anything. Again, why should your guru ask you to donate the money to his ashram? Do you think that greedy saint who wants to lay his hands on your property will lead you to the path of salvation? How can you attain salvation by shirking your family responsibilities? Is it what the *Gita* teaches you? I think you're confused. Please think clearly for awhile!"

Ram Singh was perplexed. For the first time, he realized that he was not going to achieve salvation by forsaking his family responsibilities and surrendering his property to a fraudulent saint.

"Sir! I think I made a great mistake. You're right! The saint seems to be a cheat. I won't forsake my family for his sake. But how do I get back my lands from Arun?"

"For your information, Arun has not taken your lands at all. It was a drama enacted jointly by us to prevent you from taking the wrong step."

"Is it so?" asked Ram in disbelief.

"My friend, do you think I would have ever thought of back-stabbing a friend?" said Arun Verma.

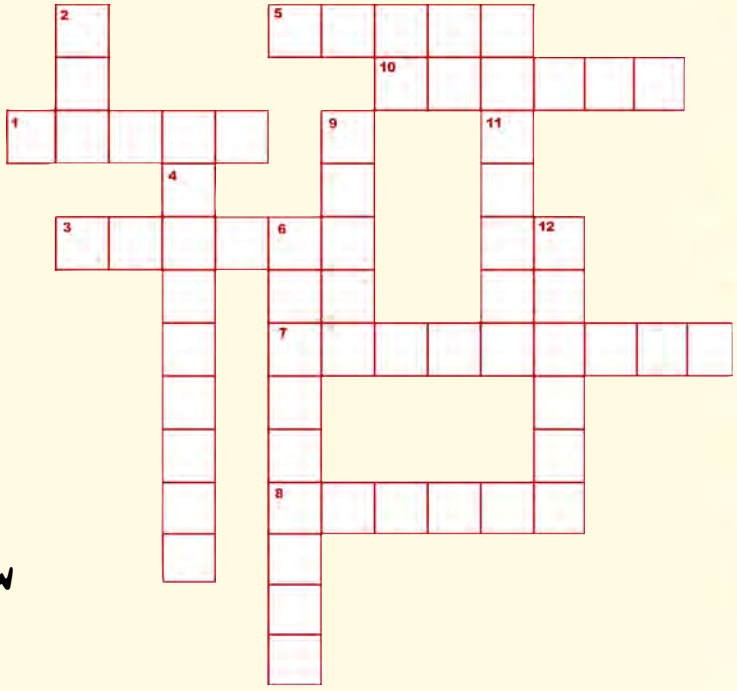
Ram Singh hugged his friend fondly. "My friend! You have saved me from taking a totally wrong step in my life!"



PUZZLE DAZZLE

CROSSWORD ON COUNTRIES





Know the countries from their national animal/bird. The clues below will help you solve the crossword.

Across:

1. Bengal Tiger is the national animal of this country (5).
3. The Black-billed magpie is the national bird of this country (5).
5. The national bird of this country is the Green Pheasant (5).
7. The Crimson bird is the national bird of this country (9).
8. It is the world's second-largest and second-most populous continent, after Asia (6).
10. The Cock is the national bird of this country(4).

Down:

2. The Bald Eagle is known as the national bird of this country – in short form (2).
4. The Lion is known as the national animal of this country (8).
6. The Kangaroo is the national animal of this country (9).
9. The Bear is the national animal of this country (6).
11. The Giant Panda is the national animal of this country (5).
12. The Cow is the national animal of this country (5)

- by R Vaasugi

SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD:

Across:
1. India, 3. Korea, 5. Japan, 7. Singapore, 8. Africa, 10.France.

Down:
2. US, 4. Sri Lanka, 6. Australia, 9. Russia, 11.China, 12.Nepal.

NUTRINE QUIZ-4 ANSWERS :



1. b. Bhanu Athaiya; 2. d. Bangalore

GLIMPSES OF THE DEVI BHAGAVATAM



God Varuna went away, and the king was plunged in gloom. Harischandra realised that the god was determined to claim Rohit.

"Father! Why do you look so remorseful?" Prince Rohit asked him one day.

The king told him all that was going on between himself and Varuna.

Rohit discussed the problem with the sons of the ministers who were his friends. They advised him to stay away from the palace.

Rohit escaped to the forest. The king tried to locate him, but failed.

When Varuna made his next visit, the king said with folded hands, "My son, for the fear of his life, has gone into hiding. I haven't been able to trace him. What should I do?"

"You're trying to deceive me!" blurted our Varuna. He cursed the king. As a result, he took ill.

The news of the king's illness reached Rohit in the forest. He decided to return to the palace.

But Indra stopped him on his way. "Is there any sense in your going home? You can't cure your father of his illness. Varuna will soon be there again, and you'll be sacrificed. That will only aggravate your father's illness. Better continue to be in hiding. Return to the palace only after your father's death and then occupy the throne," advised Indra.

Accordingly Prince Rohit went back to the forest.

The ailing king asked Vasishtha for a way out of the predicament. The sage said, "Varuna wants that you must sacrifice your son. Well, an adopted son is as good as one's real son. Adopt a son and sacrifice him. That should be appeasement enough for Varuna."

The king summoned his senior minister and asked him to look for a boy who should be fit for the Yajna. The minister went from place to place and came upon a Brahmin who had three sons, all fit for the Yajna.

The minister requested the Brahmin to spare one of his sons for the purpose. "You can take any, except the eldest one," said the Brahmin.

"You can take any, but not the youngest one," said the Brahmin's wife.

Naturally, only the second son, Sunahsefa, was left. The king adopted him. Preparations for the Yajna began.

Sunahsefa shed tears thinking of his fate. That saddened all who were present. King Harischandra was no exception.

Suddenly Sage Viswamitra appeared on the scene.

35. A KING IS PUT TO TEST

"Harischandra, spare the boy's life. Don't forget what I did for your father. You should not ignore my advice," said the sage.

The king bowed to him and said, "But how can I come out of the curse to which Varuna has subjected me? How long can I suffer?"

"Have patience," said the sage. He went near Sunahsefa and taught him a certain hymn that had the power to please Varuna.

The boy recited the hymn with great sincerity. Soon Varuna appeared there and declared that he had been satisfied. The boy was set free. The curse was lifted from the king.

Sunahsefa asked the assembled priests, "To whom should I look upon as my father? The Brahmin of whom I was born, or the king who adopted me?"

The priests gave the opinion that he should look upon Sage Viswamitra who saved him from certain death as his true father. Sunahsefa followed Sage Viswamitra.

Sage Vasishtha and Sage Viswamitra had become enemies of each other. They often quarrelled even in the presence of gods and kings. King Harischandra showed great respect to Vasishtha who was his guru and had thus annoyed Viswamitra on many occasions. Viswamitra decided to harass the king as much as possible.

One day, while the king was performing a certain fire-rite alone. Viswamitra approached him, putting on the appearance of an old Brahmin.

"O King, I'm in dire need of something. Can you fulfil my need?" he asked.

Years ago, in the course of performing a great Yajna, the king had taken an oath that he would never refuse anything to anybody.

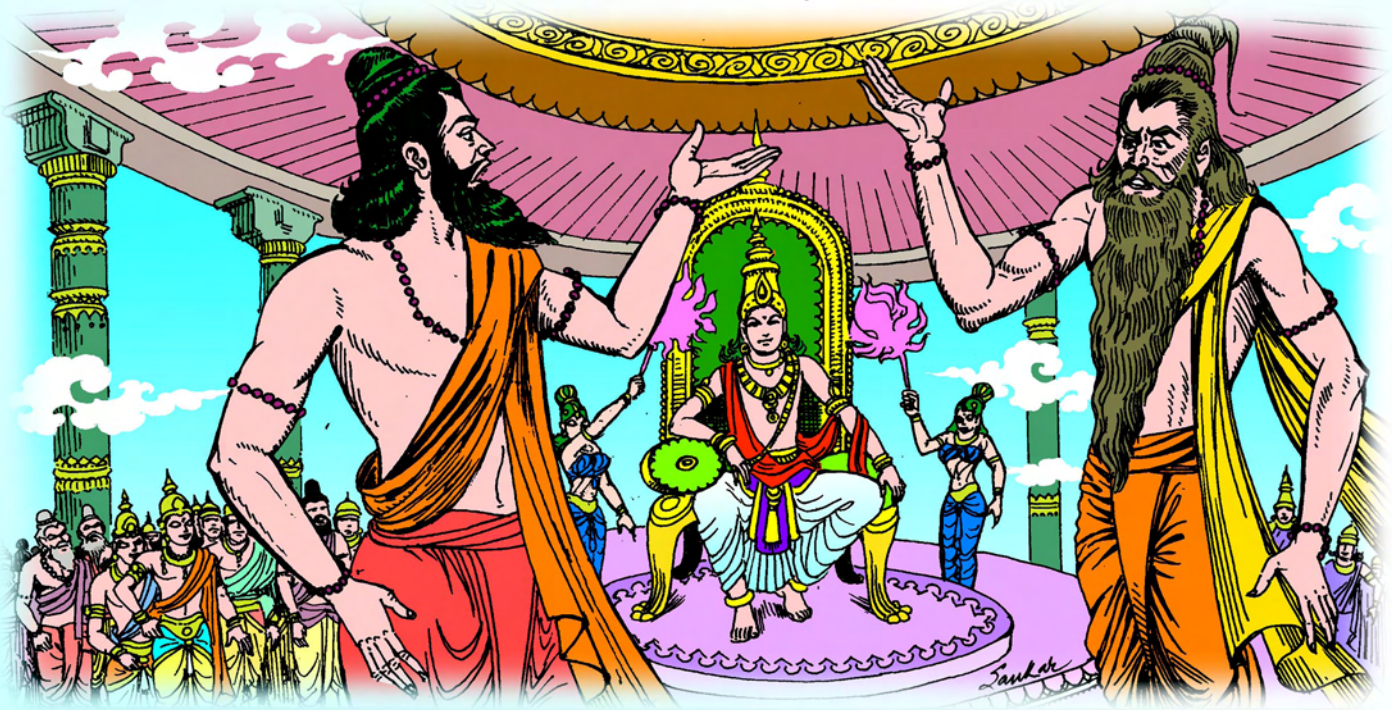
Moreover, the old Brahmin had met him at an auspicious moment. There was no question of the king showing any reluctance to oblige him. He said, "Tell me, what is your need and I'll give my life, if that is necessary, to fulfil it!"

"Very well. Remember, the God of Fire is witness to your promise. I want your kingdom and all your wealth!" spoke out the old Brahmin.

"They are yours!" readily declared King Harischandra without raising an eyebrow!

The old Brahmin nodded and said: "You and your family must vacate the palace by tomorrow morning but not before giving me my *dakshina*!"

According to the tradition, after making a donation, the donor had to give a supplementary gift known as *dakshina*. Without it, the main donation would have no meaning. ***(To continue)***



Anecdotes
FROM THE LIVES OF THE GREAT (13)

THE CONCEALED SAINT



A Yogi known as Pavhari Baba lived in Ghazipur. He was one who could perform wonders, but not many knew about his powers. However, all the people around the small hut that was his abode knew that he was a man of great compassion. His blessings could kindle the flame of love for God even in people who had never given any thought to matters spiritual.

Swami Vivekananda (1863 – 1902) had great respect for the Yogi. Once when Swamiji was in Ghazipur, he heard that a burglar had entered the Yogi's hut at midnight. In the faint light of an earthen lamp, the burglar looked for valuables. He could not find much, but there were some coins in a plate offered by a devotee of the Yogi and there were a few utensils. That was enough wealth for a night's labour for a small time burglar. After all he had not taken much pains to enter the little hermitage. The doors had not even been locked.

The fellow put the coins and a few other things in a bag. As he was tying it, it slipped and fell down on the floor with a thud.

We do not know whether the Yogi was asleep or in a state of meditation. The sound woke him up. "What's the matter, O Narayana?" he asked calmly.

Till then the burglar was under the impression that the Yogi passed the night in his hut all alone. Now that he knew there was somebody else named Narayana, too, was there, he felt nervous. Who knows if this Narayana was not a strong man who guarded his master? The burglar ran away without retrieving the booty-filled bag.

But he heard someone's footsteps behind him. Obviously Narayana was pursuing him and once caught he had had it! He ran as fast as he could. But suddenly a hand was clamped on his shoulder. "O Narayana, why are you in such a hurry that you neglected to carry with you what you had collected?" the Yogi asked the burglar and pleaded to him

to take his booty with him. The burglar understood that the Yogi saw Narayana, the Divine, in all. Since the Yogi had no attachment for anything, he wanted the burglar to be happy with those things, as he had no need for them.

All we know is, the burglar bowed and touched the Yogi's feet, but nevertheless took to his heels.

Years later Swami Vivekananda, while travelling through the Himalayas, happened to meet a sage who not only looked luminous, but proved to be a man of deep spiritual experiences. As they talked, to his utter surprise, Swamiji found out that he was the man who had burgled Pavhari Baba's hut. When the Yogi touched him with great love and addressed him as Narayana, he felt as though he was experiencing a new birth. The sinful phase of his life instantly became a matter of the past. He wondered how the Yogi could muster that kind of power to transform him. He was amazed that going to plunder the Yogi's hut for small wealth, he had received the most important and everlasting wealth.

Swamiji was no less amazed. He realized that the promise of a saint remains hidden in one who is a sinner in our eyes. **(MD)**

A BIT TOO HASTY...?



Seth Amirchand was on his way to a neighbouring village. His clerk, Kishorilal, accompanied him. The *seth* was rotund while the clerk was a reed-thin, lanky man.

Their destination lay on the other side of a canal. A slippery log of wood was the only bridge across the canal. Gingerly, they stepped on to it. Kishorilal, managed to cross the bridge without any mishap. But the *seth* slipped and missed his footing. He would have fallen if Kishorilal had not quickly grabbed his arm.

Still teetering on the bridge, the *seth* looked down into the murky water. Overwhelmed with gratitude for his employee he impulsively exclaimed, "Kishorilal, I'll give you a reward of one hundred rupees for saving me!"

The next moment, Kishorilal abruptly let go his grip on the other's arm. The *seth* tottered, swayed and dropped into the water with a loud splash.

Luckily, the water was not very deep at that point!

Ten minutes later, when the bedraggled, mud-splattered *seth* finally managed to wade ashore, dripping wet, he turned on his clerk and demanded furiously, "Why did you let go?"

"Why, sir, I only wanted to claim the reward you promised me!" answered Kishorilal nonchalantly.

"But couldn't you have waited until I was safely across?" spluttered the *seth*.

"In that case, sir, shouldn't you have waited until you were safely across before announcing a reward?" returned Kishorilal, leaving the *seth* speechless!

'SUNI' IN SPACE



An Indian-American woman is up there in the International Space Station (ISS), 350km above the earth, which has been her 'home away from home' since December 12. Sunita Williams (41), daughter of Dr.Deepak Pandya of Gujarat and Ursula Pandya, hailing from Slovenia, is the second woman of Indian origin to venture into space. The late Kalpana Chawla of Haryana was the first.

Dr. Pandya had migrated from Gujarat to the U.S.A. Sunita (Suni to her friends) was born in Ohio. She had her school education in Massachusetts. After her university education, she joined the US Navy as a pilot in their air squadron. While there, she was chosen for training in space flight. When NASA was readying *Discovery 33*, Sunita was included in the 7-member team to go on board. Space shuttle Discovery, after a couple of postponements due to bad weather, finally lifted off successfully on December 10. On the second day, the seven astronauts entered the space station. They were expected to undertake repairs to the station.

On Dec.15, Bob Curbeam and Christer Fuglesang began their spacewalk. Two days later, Sunita and Bob Curbeam went for a spacewalk which lasted eight hours, when they attended to rewiring of the space station. While in space, Sunita had a "closer" view of planet earth. She exclaimed: "It's beautiful! I have long been waiting for this day. The solar arrays look golden against the black void." Before Sunita, eight women had undertaken spacewalks–one Russian and the others all Americans.

On Dec.19, when Discovery undocked from the space station to return to earth, Sunita relieved the German astronaut Thomas Reiter, who was leaving the ISS after a five month stay. She will now remain in the space station as flight engineer in charge of 'construction' work till June 2007. Her companions on board are Michael Lopez-Algeria and Mikhail Tyurin, who are scheduled to return in March, when Discovery comes calling again.



While in space, Sunita will have her personal possessions–a Ganesha idol and a copy of the *Bhagawad Gita*. She had also taken a packet of her favourite *samosas* and a letter in Hindi from her father that she received just before she boarded Discovery.

Sunita resides in Massachusetts with her husband Michael J.Williams.



FROM TAMILNADU

'CHITTAPPAS' OR CHEATS?

Paramasivan was a clever boy. His mother and father died when he was a child. His grandmother was very affectionate towards him, and so he started living with her. The old woman, whose eyesight was failing, found him very helpful. Whenever he saw her straining at some chore, Paramasivan would rush to her and say, "*Patti*, let me do it for you; you may rest till I finish the job."

Paramasivan attended the nearby school, which worked only in the morning. By the time he returned, his grandmother would have prepared a meal. The boy enjoyed the food, not because of its taste, but he had his patti to keep company with him. The boy, therefore, took care to see that he did not join the other boys in their games at the end of school, but went straight home as his grandmother would be waiting for him to serve his food.

One day when he came from school, Paramasivan saw two strangers with his grandmother. "Paramu, come and meet your *chittappas*." They all sat together to eat the meal the old woman had prepared. The boy noticed the men often whispering to themselves.

They stayed with Paramasivan and his grandmother for a day. The next morning they told the old woman, "If you'll allow us, *mami*, we would take Paramu with us. Let him meet his other relatives in the village; we'll send him back after two days." The boy was not very happy about leaving his grandmother alone, but on seeing her nodding in approval, he went with them.

The three had not walked far when they asked Paramasivan to carry their box and basket. One of them placed the basket on his head, and the other who had a box with him made him hold it by the handle. The boy found both the box and the basket quite heavy, but he did not utter a word of protest and managed to walk slowly behind them.

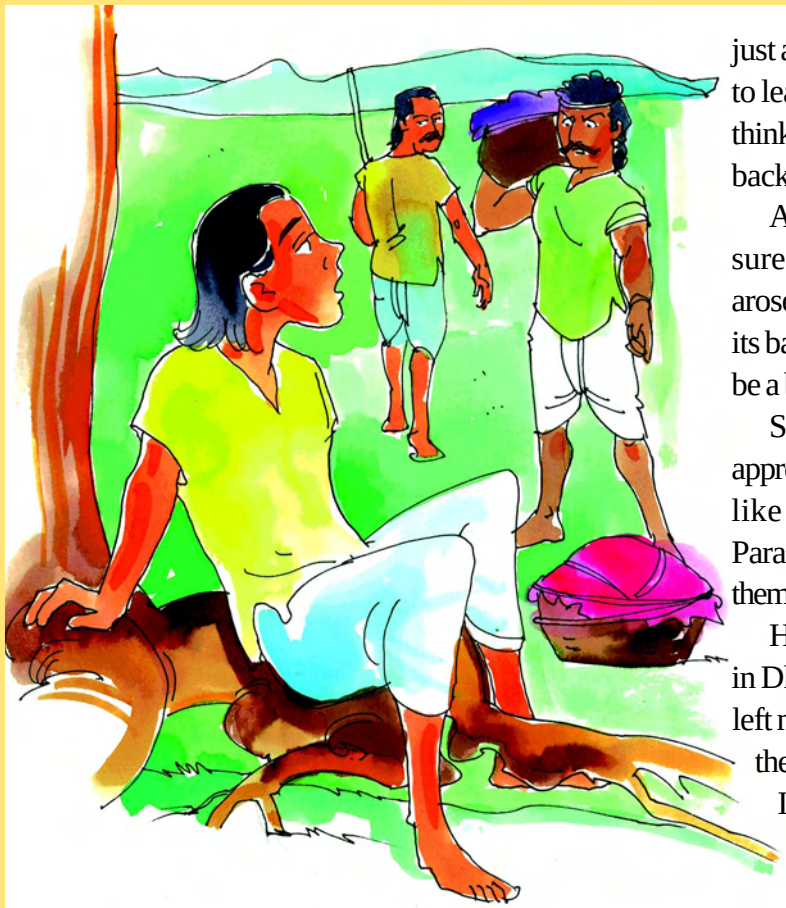
Luckily, they reached a village and stopped there. "Is this the village where my relatives live?" the boy asked. He saw the two men looking at each other and smiling wickedly. Paramasivan realized that his suspicion had only been confirmed. They had all along cheated him and his grandmother by posing as his father's brothers.

They replied, "No, that is the next village. You stay here and take care of this basket. We'll go to the market and come back soon."

"Yes, *chittappa*," said Paramasivan.

"Paramu," said one of them as he lifted the box, "don't open the basket. We had captured a rare snake and we're taking it to our village." The two men then left.





Paramasivan waited for them for a long time, but there was no sign of them. He was feeling hungry. It was a deserted place and there was no road nor many trees. He sat on the roots jutting out of a tree, contemplating how long he should wait and if his "uncles" did not turn up, how he should go back to his grandmother.

Out of sheer curiosity, he opened the basket and kept the lid aside. He did not see any snake. There was a neatly folded shawl on top. Would the snake be beneath the shawl? He gave a little kick to the basket and stood away. No snake came out. He cautiously lifted the shawl and found that the basket contained eatables–sweetmeat and some delicacies!

Paramasivan let out a sigh of relief. He could now satiate his hunger, and if his uncles questioned him, he would have a perfect answer: how long could he remain hungry? One thing was certain. The two men had wanted to cheat him by saying that the bag contained a 'rare' snake! Why did they tell him a lie? he wondered.

After helping himself with the delicacies and some of the sweetmeat, he closed the basket and tied it securely just as it was left to be taken care of by him, and decided to leave the place. He retraced his steps on the pathway thinking that he would somehow reach his village and go back to his grandmother.

As he walked, he came across a river which, he was sure, he and his uncles had not crossed. Now a doubt arose in his mind: should he cross the river or walk along its bank till he came upon a road? He hoped there would be a bridge up somewhere; so he walked along the bank.

Suddenly he heard footsteps. Two persons approached him from the opposite direction. They looked like guards or soldiers. They stopped on seeing Paramasivan. "Who are you, young man?" asked one of them.

He mentioned his name and said, "I belong to a village in Dharmapuri. I was going with my uncles, when they left me to attend to some errand. I waited for a long time; they did not come back, so I started back for my village. I'm not sure whether I took the right pathway."

"We're the king's guards and we're looking for two men who have escaped with his jewels," they explained. "Did you by any chance see two men?"

"None other than my uncles," said Paramasivan. "Now that you tell me about two men and the king's jewels, my doubts have only been confirmed." And the boy narrated how the men had introduced themselves as his father's brothers and how they persuaded his grandmother to let them take him along with them. He also told them about the box and the basket and how he felt cheated.

"They could be the men we're searching for," the guardsmen said. "Will you take us to the place where they had left you? They might have by now come back and been waiting for you. Don't worry, we'll take you back to your village."

Paramasivan now led the way; he recognized the deserted place where he was left to wait with the basket. Suddenly, he halted. He could see at a distance the two men sitting below a tree and eating. The basket and box were by their side.

One of the guardsmen said, "Paramasivan, you go to them alone, and while you three talk, we shall come from behind and catch them. If they are not the men we want,

NUTRINE CONTEST-4



Take a close look at the Nutrine advertisment on the back cover and comple the sentence "The Best ..... in Town". Write down the answer on a piece of paper, add your name, date of birth, class, name of school, and complete home address with PINcode and send it to **Chandamama India Ltd.,** 82 Defence Officers Colony, Ekkatuthangal, Chennai 600 097, before January 31. An attractive prize* awaits you.

nutrine India's largest selling sweets and toffees.

*Conditions apply

we shall let them free. Remember, we'll take you back to your village."

Paramasivan looked forward to some exciting adventure. He mustered courage and went forward. He heard one of the men shout: "There! That mischievous boy is coming!"

"Where were you?" the other asked angrily, holding him by his shoulders.

"*Chittappa*, I waited for you for a long time and then went in search of you," said Paramasivan innocently. "And I was also feeling hungry!"

"We told you not to open the basket; why did you then open it?"

"I wanted to take a look at the snake; there was no snake, and I saw some delicacies, instead!" the boy replied. "So, what you told me was a lie!" he added boldly.

One of the men caught Paramasivan's hand, and the other was about to thrash him. The boy resisted and there was a scuffle. The two men did not notice the guardsmen behind them. They knew their presence only when their hands were caught and tied from behind. "So, you are the ones who escaped with the king's jewels? Where have you hidden them?" one of the guardsmen asked angrily.

The two men knew their game was up. They confessed. "We sold them to a pawnbroker!"

One of the guardsmen took one of the men to the pawnbroker. The man was made to return the money and collect the jewels. They both then came back and joined the other three. The guards, the two men and Paramasivan then marched to the palace, where the king ordered the men to be imprisoned. He complimented Paramasivan for helping the guardsmen to catch the two thieves. The boy was taken back to his village and he told his grandmother all that had happened. She shed tears of joy. She hugged the boy. "Paramu, I never knew you could be so bold as to tackle two thieves. I'm sorry I believed them when they told me they were your *chittappas*."

A few days later, the king sent for Paramasivan and his grandmother, and gave them a place in the palace to live. He also appointed tutors for Paramasivan, who realized he did not have to bother about his future.



LAUGH TILL YOU DROP!



Analysing humor is like dissecting a frog. Few people are interested and the frog dies of it.

- E. B. White



Monica: What do you do for relaxation?
Manish: I like to go fishing during the rain, under a bridge.
Monica: Fishing, during the rain, and under a bridge?
Manish: It's the best place. The fishes keep crowding in to avoid getting wet.



Father: "I know why you are getting such bad grades. You're spending too much time watching TV."
Son: "I'm sorry, dad, you'll have to phrase that in the form of a question."

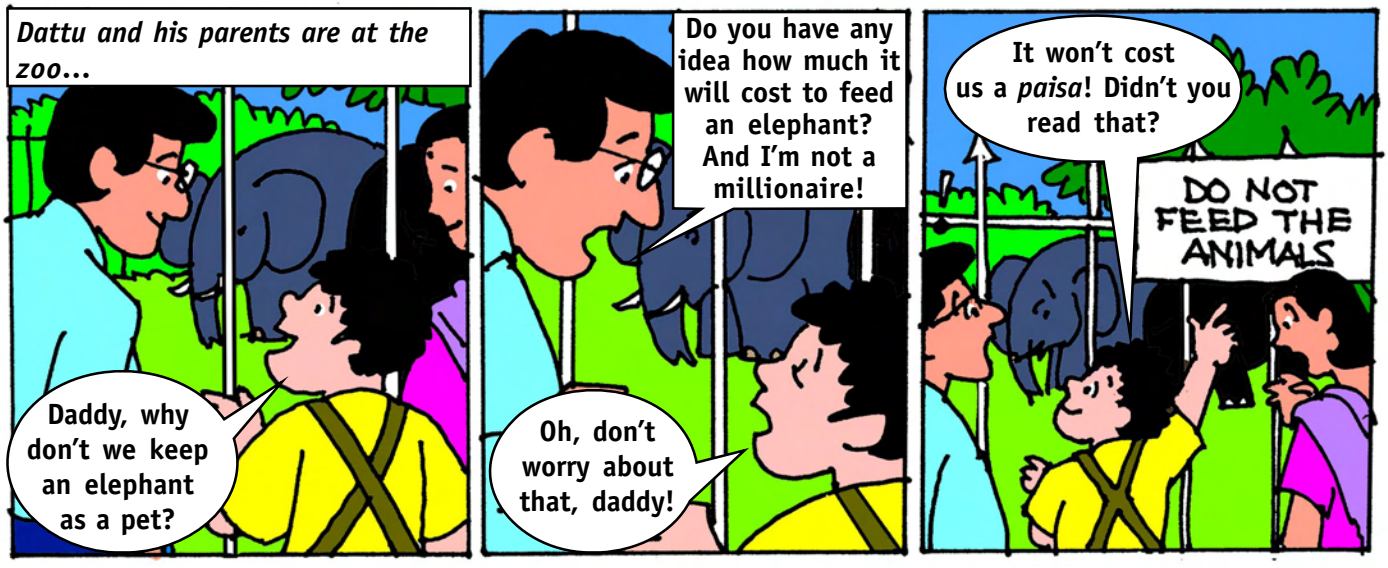
Doctor: "I can't do anything about your condition. I'm afraid it's hereditary.
Patient: "In that case, send the bill to my parents."





Tourist: How would you describe the rain in this part of the country?
Local resident: Little drops of water falling from the sky.

DUSHTU DATTU



A DISCOVERY THROUGH SHOWERS OF ARROWS

ADVENTURE & EXPLORATION

More than four hundred years ago, the people of Spain dreamed of a fabled city known as the El Dorado. It was the splendid land of a king who was said to have been covered with gold dust so many times that he was permanently gilded. His kingdom naturally abounded in precious metals, gems and cinnamon.

Many wanted to explore it, but only a few had the means and the courage for it. On Christmas day in 1539, Gonzalo Pizarro, brother of Francisco Pizarro, the famous conqueror of Peru, set out to seek this great realm of gold and riches. He had, as his lieutenant, a daring adventurer called Francisco de Orellana (see portrait). They all believed that this wonderful country indeed did exist and they would discover it and grab its fabulous wealth.

They crossed the snowy heights of the great mountain range of the Andes. Intense and unbearable was the cold and many were frozen to death. On the other side they came to a land where it rained continuously every day for two long months. More and more members of the expedition succumbed to the extreme cold. They soon came to the land where cinnamon grew in plenty. Before them lay dense and almost impenetrable forest. But they forged their way through it in search of the gold that might lie far beyond. Their provisions were almost exhausted and they had to appease their hunger with berries and roots.



When the expedition reached River Napo, the leader ordered his second in command, Francisco de Orellana, along with fifty men to sail downstream on a wooden barque built from hewn trees in search of provisions and possible signs of the elusive treasure. Soon the party arrived at a hamlet on the bank. Swift and dangerous was the current that had borne them so far. It now looked impossible to fight against it to return to where they had left the rest of the team. Orellana had in him a burning spirit of adventure. So, it took him little to make up his mind and give his captain gonzalo Pizarro the slip and himself continue on his exploration.

Orellana and his men rapidly moved downstream and passed the mouths of many rivers with no sign of any natives. Once they narrowly escaped being sunk. Provisions were fast running out. A day came when they had nothing to eat but the skins which formed their girdles and hot soup prepared by boiling the leather of their shoes with some herbs. How long could they continue? They were almost resigned to death when one day there came the sound of distant drums. The turn of the river

brought them to a village. Around it stood fully armed natives, ready to protect their property.

A brisk fight ensued and soon the local people were driven into the forest. They were no match for the adventurers. The Spaniards entered the hamlet and appeased their hunger on all that was stored there. Later the savages returned. With a few gifts, Orellana managed to induce them to bring more provisions for the journey. The following day thirteen chieftains arrived wearing feathered plumes and gilt ornaments. Declaring the King of Spain as the rightful ruler of the country, the adventurer and his men continued their advance along with the current of the unknown river. How far could be now their dreamland, El Dorado?

Down the swollen river they went and days after days passed with no sign of human life on its banks. Once again food became scarce and hunger was driving them to great desperation. Yet the hopeful men doggedly pressed on and they knew not whether they will ever be able to reach their destination. But one morning as they approached a place called Machiparo, suddenly there appeared before them a number of canoes full of warlike natives holding large shields made of animal skins. They were vigorously beating the drums and shouting bloodcurdling threats at the white strangers who would soon become their food.

The brave explorer gathered his men but to their dismay found that their gunpowder was wet. Now they had to rely on their crossbows. Hundreds of poisoned arrows flew in the air towards them. The angry locals were bent on capturing the inquisitive visitors who had trespassed into their territories. Defending themselves with great skill, the Spaniards managed to push their way into the hamlet. The natives had by now reinforced their army numbering more than two thousand men. Forceful was their attack, but the Spaniards forced their way onwards and managed to throw off their enemies.

Only eighteen of the Spanish explorer's men were wounded and all recovered except one soldier. "In this fierce fight," remembered one of them, "none was more valiant than Orellana, whose example and bravery inspired his men to deeds of valour that on other battlefields would have brought them fame."

As there was nothing further to find in this place except some food and provisions, the captain decided to continue on his journey. Even then thousands of angry natives pursued them in more than hundred canoes that surrounded their brigantines like tiny insects. They beat their drums, blew their horns and shouted their war cries. The noise was terrifying.

Then they came across a smaller river out of the one they were sailing on. Curiously its ink-black water refused to mingle with the greater stream, but flowed by its side for many miles, with a well-cut line between black and white. The explorers looked on at the phenomenon with wonder! They could not explain why it was so. Suddenly the river on which they moved grew so broad that standing on one bank it was impossible to see the opposite. An old native told them that they were indeed in the land of a unique race of warriors.

A bend in the river soon brought them to a village. They were attacked by the natives who were surprisingly led by women warriors whose fierceness and courage seemed to inspire the whole army. They were very tall, fair and robust. Their long and braided hair wound over their heads. They had skins around their waists and bows and arrows in their hands. It did seem to Orellana and his men that they were indeed face to face with the Amazons, the female warriors of the ancient Greek legends.

As the natives waited for more reinforcements, the Spaniards quickly embarked and sailed off. Orellana's men were now slowly getting desperate and impatient. They had been travelling down this

great river for months now. Where was their dream city of El Dorado? Does it exist at all? How many more months would they have to go before they emerged into the open sea and sail back home? The exhausted sailors even planned to mutiny and began disobeying their captain.

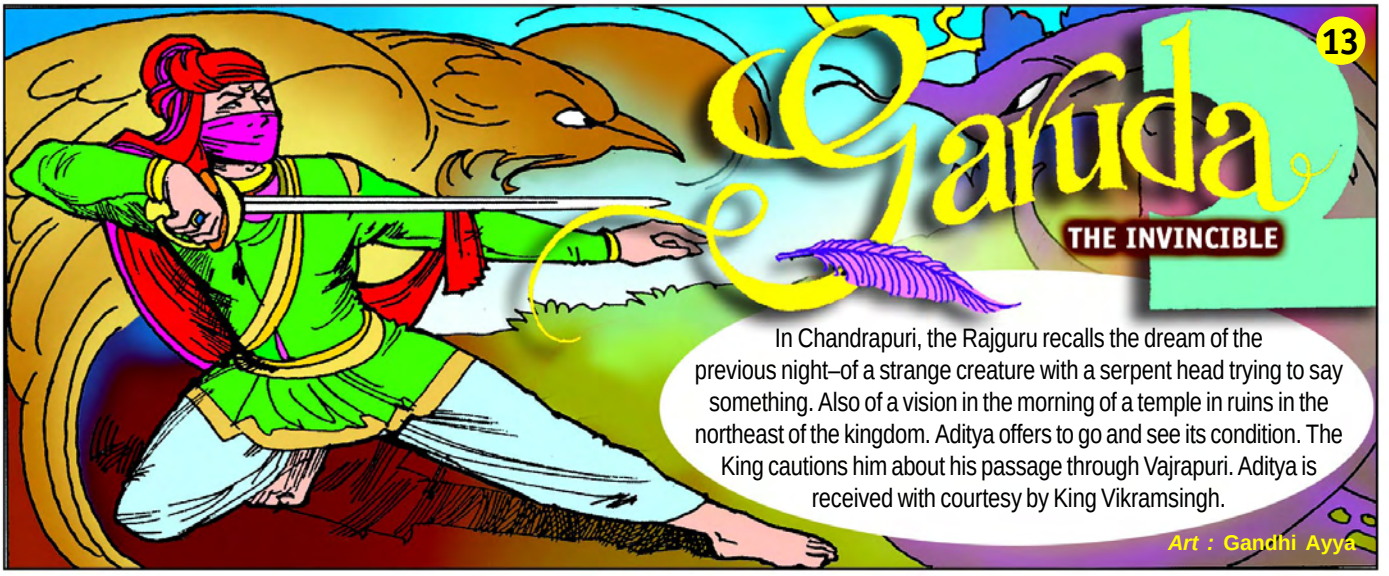
They could do nothing better than proceed along with the current of the mighty river. Their boats were battered every hour of the day by heavy showers of enemy arrows and looked like porcupines. One fine morning, to their joy and relief, they arrived at the mouth of the river and emerged into the open sea, the Atlantic Ocean. Orellana named the great stream they were sailing on as the Amazon River after the marvellous race of women warriors he and his men met on its bank.

Finally, with the continued skirmishes with the natives and after nearly nine long months and losing around fourteen of his men, Orellana and his companions sailed back home to Spain. Pizarro, the leader of the expedition, waiting for his lieutenant who never showed up again, had meanwhile returned to his country. With great enthusiasm Orellana told the king of all his adventures. So impressed was His Majesty that he granted him a second voyage in 1544 to conquer the newly discovered lands. But unfortunately the great explorer died in the course of this expedition.

Francisco de Orellana's was the most improbable successful of voyages in history. He broke away from his leader, the only one of the famous explorers to win fame despite such an action. In search of the dream city of El Dorado, he traced the mighty Amazon River from its source in the Andes Mountains to its outlet in the great Atlantic Ocean.

(AKD)





At Vajrapuri... After meeting Vikramsingh and Pushparaj, Aditya is taken to the guest apartments. His bodyguard enters.

Sir, two men were here enquiring when you would leave for the northeast and what route we would be taking.

So, my presence in Vajrapuri and where I'm put up for the day is no more a secret! We've to be careful.

In the evening, Pushparaj calls on Aditya.

Prince, I shall take you for the banquet at the palace.

It's a great honour!

At the banquet...

I hope the dishes are to your liking.

Of course...

Prince, you must taste this, it is a specially prepared sherbet.

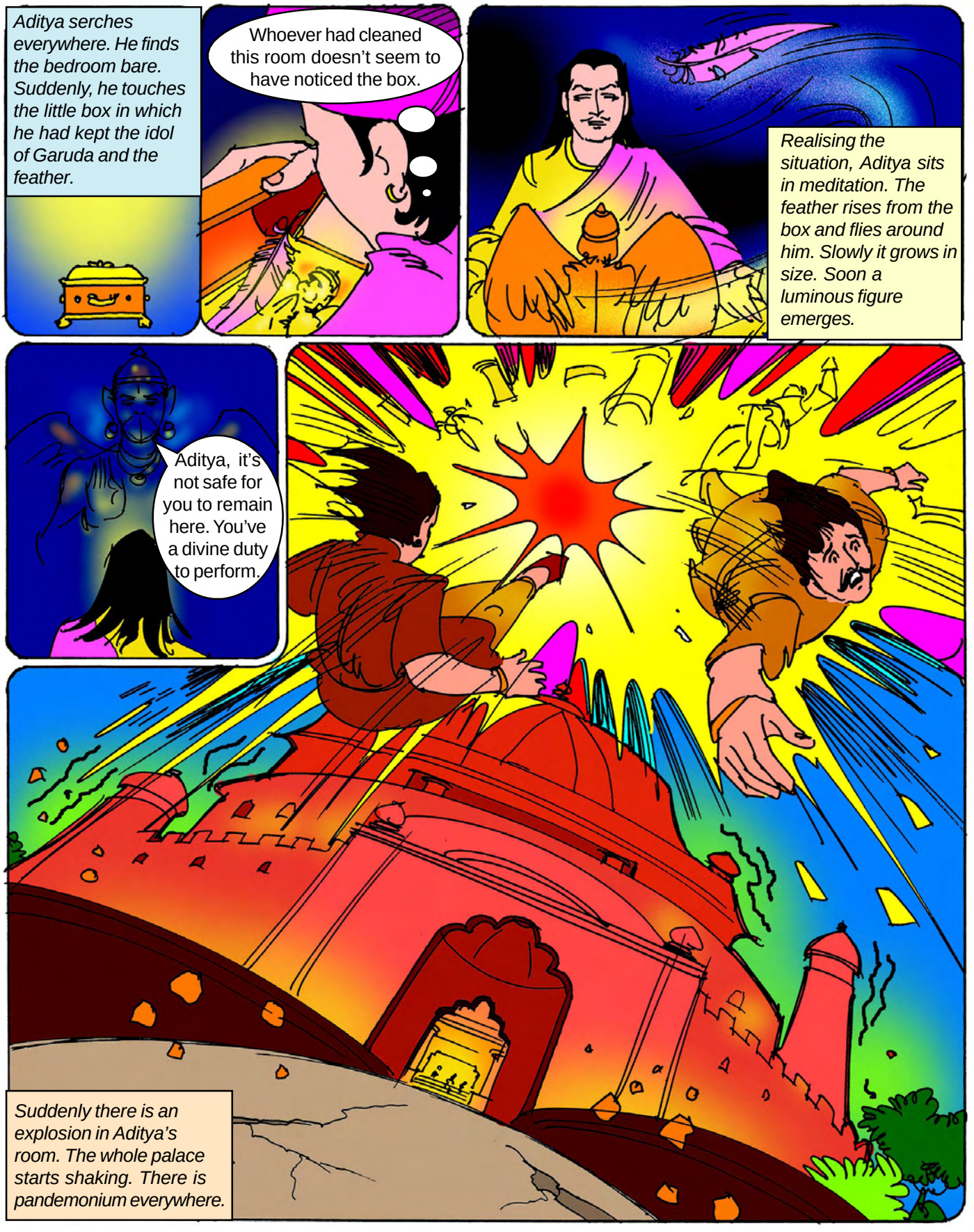
How can I refuse when you're so solicitous?

Aditya is seen off by the King and the Prime Minister.

At the apartments...

I'm going to bed. Keep yourself ready, we must leave early morning.


In Chandrapuri... Ramsingh gets a message from his men that neither Aditya nor his bodyguards have left Vajrapuri.
I hope nothing is amiss with Aditya. I'm sure the Divine will protect him. Anyway, send that message to Vajrapuri asking Aditya to cancel his trip to north-east and return immediately.
I shall send someone on horseback.
It's strange that my men are not able to contact even the bodyguards.
When Aditya gets the message, he will certainly respond.
Meanwhile, Ramsingh, send our men to seal the border with Vajrapuri.
I shall send our soldiers to prevent anyone from Vajrapuri entering our kingdom.
Nobody else need know where Aditya is.
In Vajrapuri... Aditya wakes up with a heavy head.
What has happened to me?
That sherbet at the banquet...?
Where am I? This is not where I slept!
Am I imprisoned?
Aditya gets up and gropes along the walls.
Ah! There is a door!
No light! And no sound!
Aditya pushes open the door.And he is back in his bed-chamber
But where are my belongings? There's nothing here!


Aditya serches everywhere. He finds the bedroom bare. Suddenly, he touches the little box in which he had kept the idol of Garuda and the feather.
Whoever had cleaned this room doesn't seem to have noticed the box.
Realising the situation, Aditya sits in meditation. The feather rises from the box and flies around him. Slowly it grows in size. Soon a luminous figure emerges.
Aditya, it's not safe for you to remain here. You've a divine duty to perform.
Suddenly there is an explosion in Aditya's room. The whole palace starts shaking. There is pandemonium everywhere.


The luminous figure manifests into Garuda and gently picks up Aditya and flies away. The guest apartments start crumbling down.
On hearing the explosion Vikramsingh and Pushparaj come out to enquire.
What happened?
Sire, the guest apartments have crashed! Please don't go any further.
What's that? It looks like a human being with large wings!
Human being with wings? Where's Aditya?
Did we treat the prince badly?
Sire, I wanted to hand him over to Narendradeva for a sacrifice, but now?
To continue

CHANDAMAMA QUIZ ANSWERS

QUIZ - 11:

1. In Swahili (Africa) language, Uhuru means freedom. The X-ray telescope called by that name on the X-ray observatory launched into space in 1971 discovered the first black hole.
2. At the palace of Kubla Khan, where Niccola Polo of Venice introduced his son Marco Polo to the Chinese emperor.
3. George Weller, an American reporter, who managed to visit Hiroshima soon after the first atom bomb was dropped on that city in 1945.
4. The boy Hiralal, on his way to Banares, meets an old man who presents the boy with a flute made of sandalwood, and tells him how to play the instrument.
5. Varanasi, dedicated to Rudreswar Mahadev.
6. The first manned flight of an airship which carried H. Giffard of France.
7. Nasir Ali, a Persian noble, invited to the court of Aurangazeb. He was expected to match his verse with that of the versatile daughter of the emperor.
8. The animal was responsible for killing 436 human beings. It was the first man-eater tigress that Jim Corbett had hunted down.
9. In the Indian version of the popular comics Spiderman.
10. Hari and his father on their way to the Andamans; the story is titled "Water, water everywhere, but...."



WINNER (chosen by lot)

M.K. Chandrahasan, Yapral, Andhra Pradesh (All-correct entries came from Pragati Panda, Dhankauda, Orissa and Anjana Jayaram Rao, Chennai)

QUIZ - 12

1. Ostrich.
2. The country called Panama.
3. Colonel Fawcett, Jack Fawcett, and Raleigh Rimett. They disappeared in the Madidi forests of Brazil.
4. Dr. William Beebe who, in his Bathysphere, succeeded in going down more than 3,000 ft in the sea.
5. The word 'boxer' came from boxing, indulged in by Kung-fu experts who were members of a secret society.
6. Arijit had married a Rajput girl before he became king. Their son, Hamir, remained with his mother and grandfather till he was 12 years old.
7. Aluminium.
8. Panama Canal; 23 million US dollars.
9. In Disney Land. The colourful parade once a day is a grand spectacle.
10. The king in a Polish legend and his courtiers are seen pleading with Vladimir to correct their elongated noses.



WINNER : The lone all-correct entry was received from Amaresh Guru of Rajborasambar, Orissa.

CHANDAMAMA INDIA QUIZ

From the new year, we introduce Chandamama Quiz in a different format. It will be based on Indian themes–starting with MYTHOLOGY in January.

AN ALL-CORRECT ENTRY WILL FETCH A CASH PRIZE OF RS 250*

What you should do: 1. Write down the answers; 2. Mention your name, age (you should be below 16), full postal address with PIN Code; 3. Mention your subscriber number, if you are a subscriber; 4. Write on the envelope **CHANDAMAMA INDIA QUIZ** with your complete address; 5. Mail your entry to reach us by **January 31, 2007**; 6. The answers will be published in the March 2007 issue.

*** If there are more than one all-correct entry, a lot will be taken to decide the prizewinner. However, the names of all those who have sent all-correct entries will be published.**



1. Which sage was born with a small horn on his forehead? What special power did he possess?
2. What is Vedasruti? In which epic is it mentioned?
3. How did Krishna come to acquire his conch called Panchajanya?
4. When the Ocean of Milk was churned by the Devas and Asuras, several precious things came up including a tree. What was its name? Where was it planted later?
5. What was the name of Dronacharya's sister?
6. Bharati is another name of a goddess. Which goddess?
7. What was Bhishma's original name? What is known as Bhishma's vow?
8. Bibhatsu was another name of a great warrior in the *Mahabharata*? Who was the warrior? How did he acquire that name?
9. A little girl, while playing, lost her ball behind a heavy bow, which she had no difficulty in kicking it aside. Who was the girl?
10. Dilip was a king belonging to the Surya dynasty. Which ruler preceded him? Which king succeeded him?
11. The festival of Holi is associated with one of Vishnu's incarnations. What is the significance?
12. Who did they give birth to when three women drank the sacred milk given to them by the god of Fire?

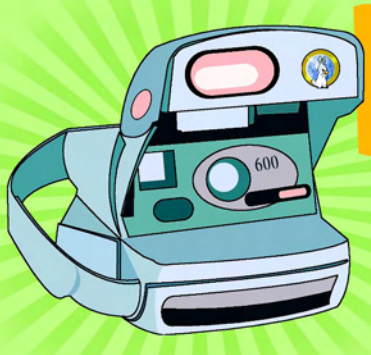


Photo Caption CONTEST

You may write it on a post card marking it:

Photo Caption Contest, CHANDAMAMA

and mail it to reach us before the 20th of the current month.



TATA NARAYANAMURTHY

Can you write a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other?



K. RAMA KRISHNA RAO

Congratulations!

November 2006 Lucky Winner:

MS.PRATIDHEE PALAK
D-4/4 R.C.I. Quarters
P.O.Vigyana Kancha
Hyderabad 500 069





WINNING ENTRY

"BUDDING MUSICIANS"
"MADE FOR EACH OTHER"

The best entry will receive a Prize of Rs.100 and it will also be published in the issue after the next. Please write your address legibly and add PIN code.

CHANDAMAMA ENGLISH ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Within India Rs. 180/- by surface mail
Payment in favour of
CHANDAMAMA INDIA LIMITED
No. 82 Defence Officers Colony
Ekkatuthangal, Chennai - 600 097.

Printed and Published by B. Viswanatha Reddi at B.N.K. Press Pvt. Ltd., Chennai - 600 026 on behalf of Chandamama India Limited No. 82 Defence Officers Colony, Ekkatuthangal, Chennai - 600 097. Editor : B. Viswanatha Reddi (Viswam)

SMART WAY TO SAVE FUEL



Mohan was shocked. Something strange was happening on the arterial road that night. As soon as he stopped his car at the traffic signal and kept the engine running, as was his habit, he was bewildered to see the traffic signal post moving towards him like a robot. It stopped near him.

"Hello! Would you like to listen to a story?" Mohan, amused at the strange happening, said, "Go on!" The signal post then narrated this story: "The master of the house instructed his gardener to water the plants when he would be out of station for a week. 'Don't be stingy with water!' he added. From the very next day, it started raining heavily. Still, the gardener blindly complied with his master's instructions and went on watering the plants with plentiful quantities of water. As a result, not only most of the plants in the garden were decayed, but the neighbouring gardens got flooded. Now, what do you think of the act of the gardener?"

Mohan said, "Utter foolishness! He should not have watered the garden when it was raining."

The signal sharply reacted: "Mr.Mohan! Aren't you doing something similarly foolish? Why do you want to run the engine when it isn't required? Aren't you wasting precious petrol? Don't you know you're polluting the atmosphere? You should always switch off your engine whenever the waiting time at a traffic signal is 30 seconds or more. With so many vehicles piled up near me and each motorist running his engine without switching it off, imagine the cumulative waste of petrol and the resultant pollution! Burning precious oil is a national waste, and polluting the atmosphere is a national crime"

"Oh! I never thought of that!" said Mohan, promptly switching off his engine.

"That's good! Please educate others, too!" Having said this, the signal post then went back to its place before turning green.



CHANDAMAMA (English)
Regd. with Registrar of Newspaper for India No. 17914/70
Licensed to post WPP - Inland No.TN/CC(S)Dn/98/06-08, Foreign No. 99/06-08

JANUARY 2007
Regd No.TN/CC(S)Dn/166/06-08

1...2...3...



Full of Ghee

Full of Malt

Full of Milk

HAPPY NEW YEAR

nutrine
MAHA
LACTO

The Best Lacto In Town

India's largest selling sweets and toffees.